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THE

Vale of Glendor;

OR,

MEMOIRS

OF

EMILY WESTBROOK.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON.

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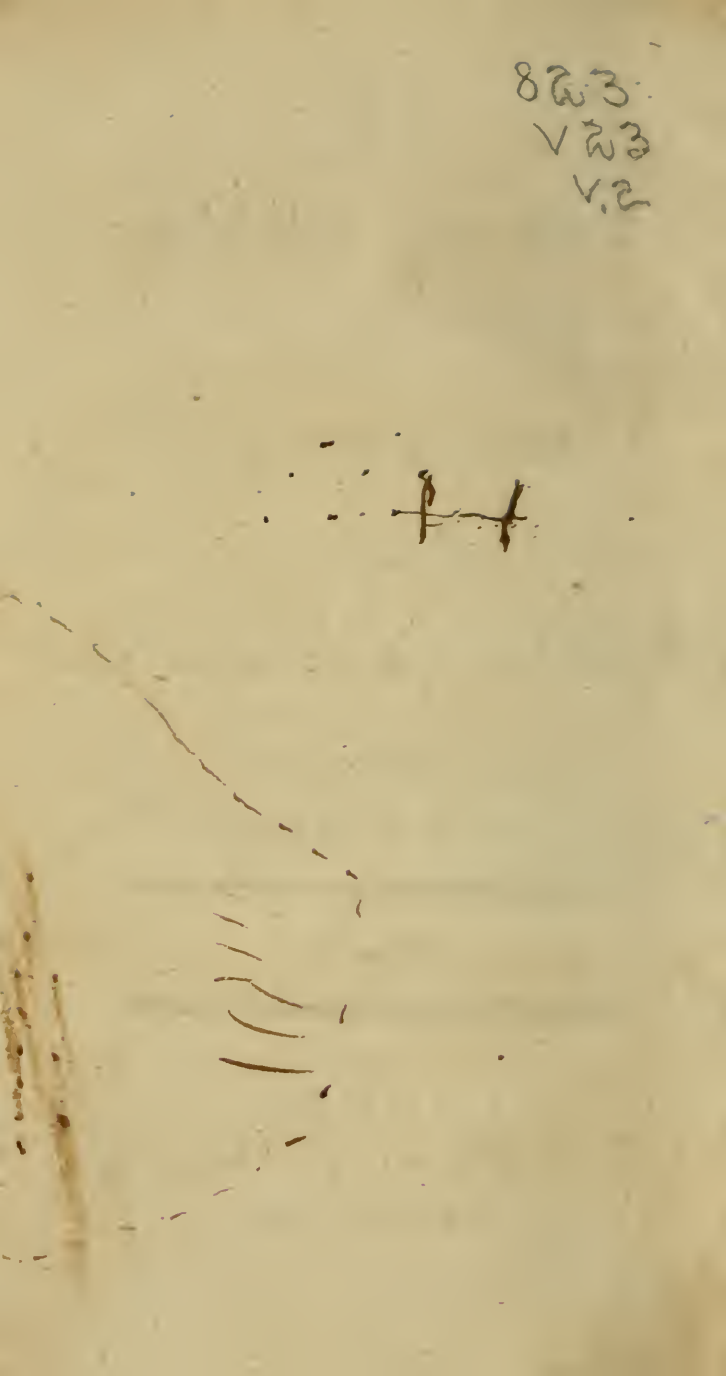

TO THE

READER.

THE Editor of these memoirs can make no other apology for offering them to the public, than that having found them among some papers of a deceased relation, she thought they contained some moral reflections that might convey instruction; and should they miss of that effect, they at least abounded with none of those vitiating subjects which too often render works of the kind, the most pernicious amusement a female can possibly fly to; even far more dangerous than

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than bad company: as thoſe ideas imbibed from an improper choice of books, are often more durably impreſſed upon the mind, than thoſe acquired by libertine converſation; for the poiſon they contain is ſo artfully blended with the amuſive tale, that they inſenſibly intereſt, and ſteal upon the attention, without creating any of that diſguſt, which perſonal levity (or even little foibles) naturally excite.

The memoirs of Emily Weſtbrook may be read without any of thoſe emotions that are excited from a relation of events that never had exiſtence but in the ideas of the writer:

writer: and it is hoped they will afford ſome beneficial obſervations to thoſe who require not the aid of the marvellous to render a good example worthy their imitation: and ſhould they even furniſh their readers with only a few uſeful hints, the time which has been employed in preparing them for public inſpection, will not be thought miſ-ſpent by their

Moſt obedient

Humble Servant,

The EDITOR.

THE

VALE of GLENDOR;

OR,

MEMOIRS of EMILY WESTBROOK.

THOSE who have ſeen the calm boſom of the ocean ſuddenly diſcompoſed by raging winds and burſting clouds, can beſt form an idea of the ſwelling tide of grief which agitated that of our lovely traveller, till tears forced a paſſage from her eyes, and helped to eaſe her burſting heart. Unſkilled in the deceptions of

mankind, ſhe doubted not the truth of this melancholy intelligence: and though ſhe had never ſeen the perſon before her at Mr. Aubrey's, entertained no ſuſpicions of her not being really his houſekeeper; and giving full ſcope to the effuſions of her grief, aſked no farther queſtions, but ſuffered herſelf to be led to the carriage in waiting; and, leaving to the ſervants the care of her baggage, ſeated herſelf by the plauſible impoſtor; and, while thinking herſelf every moment drawing nearer to the paternal roof, was, in the ſpace of a couple of hours, quite out of the road to Glendor, and flying with the ſwifteſt veloſity to the ſnares prepared for her by Sir William, who waited at a diſtant ſtage,

ſtage, and propoſed ſecuring the unmoleſted poſſeſſion of his lovely prey, by taking the road to Dover, and embarking with her immediately for Calais.

When the firſt effuſions of her grief were in ſome degree ſubſided, ſhe began to put many queſtions to her companion concerning her father's illneſs: ſhe then proceeded to aſk, how long ſhe had lived with Mr. Aubrey—and what was become of the worthy woman who acted in the ſame capacity at the time ſhe left the country; and could not help expreſſing her aſtoniſhment that Louiſa ſhould never, in any of her letters, mention ſuch a change in the family.

For all theſe queſtions ſhe was prepared, but replied with much

brevity; and fearing enquiries might be made which she should be less able to answer without a discovery, pretended to be quite overcome with her fatigue, and soon after sunk into a pretended slumber, which Emily was too good natured to disturb; and contented herself with the melancholy amusement of her own sad reflections.

But the dawn of morning gave a new turn to her ideas, and awakened the most cruel alarms. A pretended sleep, on the part of the ancient matron, had, in fact, given place to a real one; and not only discovered to her deluded companion the most disgusting and unpromising set of features she had ever beheld, (for grief had prevented any prior remarks) but also

ſo that they were in a road ſhe was unacquainted with: for though ſhe had made but one journey to London, her memory was not ſo little retentive as to prevent her from obſerving the difference of the country, through which ſhe paſſed; and on the firſt diſcovery of the novel ſcenes before her, with an affrighted countenance jogged the old ſeducer, and begged her to awaken, for the drivers had certainly miſtaken the road.

"No, no, never fear, Miſs, their conducting us ſafe; they have only taken a better road for expedition.—You will ſoon know where you are.—But you had better do as I have done to beguile the time, for I am ſure you muſt want ſleep,

and the fatigue will be too much for you.

This anſwer did not ſerve to ſubdue the fears of Emily.—She began to ſuſpect ſhe knew not what—and a Dover diligence at that inſtant paſſing by them, at once confirmed her ſhe was betrayed; and the more ſo from her companion ſtooping forward in the chaiſe, to prevent her obſerving the inſcription as it drove by.

"Good Heavens! exclaimed ſhe in tremulous accents, "where are we going? I plainly ſee I am deceived, or how came a Dover ſtage in the road to Glendor? Stop," cried ſhe to the drivers, loud as ſhe could raiſe her tremulous voice; "tell me where you are carrying us." "Drive on, fellows," ſaid the

the vile wretch, ſeeing they were going to reply; "obey your orders, and anſwer no queſtions whoever aſks them." Then turning to Miſs Weſtbrook, with rather a milder aſpect, ſaid, "be not alarmed, Miſs, you are in no danger, aſſure yourſelf.—It is true we are not in the road to Glendor, but you are going to your friends.—You will not ſurely be ſorry to learn, that your father in reality is well as he has been for ſome months paſt; that he is ſome miles from home, and has prepared for you an agreeable ſurpriſe?"

"Vile impoſtor!" interrupted Emily, reſuming her natural dignity and ſpirit; "ceaſe your deceitful equivocations, nor dare to make

uſe of ſo reſpectable a name as my father's to forward your baſe deſigns. It is not the province of a friend to wound the heart as a prelude to an agreeable ſurpriſe: ſuch manœuvres are natural only to an enemy, and ſuch I am convinced you are; or the ſtill viler agent of ſome one whoſe deſigns will not bear avowal."

"Such haughtineſs ill befits the daughter of a plain country gentleman, Miſs:—but when the Baronet has you in poſſeſſion, he will teach you better manners to your ſuperiors."

"What Baronet?" beginning to ſuſpect the truth.—"My father is, as you are pleaſed to ſay, only a plain country gentleman; I thought I was going to him.

"When

"When Sir William is tired of you, perhaps you may, Miſs," retorted ſhe with a ſneer, which ſtill added more uglineſs to her features, "for he is not very conſtant in his amours, therefore do not grieve, for a ſhort time may reſtore you to your friends."

"Wretch!" replied Emily, "to add inſult to cruelty! But know that neither can affect me. I deſpiſe equally yourſelf and baſe employer. There is an over-ruling Providence that watches over the innocent, and diſappoints the bad; to that power I truſt my cauſe.—I am prepared to meet Sir William, ſince it is to him I owe this favour; and the firſt uſe I ſhall make of my influence over him, will be to reward your inſolence as it de-

 ſerves;

ſerves; for though appointed his agent in this iniquitous buſineſs, I am convinced ſuch preſumptuous behaviour was no part of his inſtructions."

She ſaid no more, but the dignity with which that was uttered, awed the old beldam into ſilence and reſpect. — She began to think ſhe had indeed gone too far, and endeavoured to atone for it by the moſt ſubmiſſive and fawning ſpeeches.

"Silence, ſycophant!" ſaid the injured beauty; "your ſervile fawning is as hateful to me as your inſolence.—All that proceeds from the tongue ſo nearly allied to a wicked heart, muſt be deteſtable. I ſuppoſe it is not your orders to travel all day without refreſhment; I therefore deſire we may ſtop to procure

procure ſome as ſoon as poſſible, for I find much need of it."

"When we next change horſes," was the reply, and a long ſilence enſued: during which the invention of poor Emily was on the rack to elude the threatening danger, and eſcape from the vigilance of her Duenna, before ſhe was reſigned into the hands of the Baronet, whom ſhe was now conſcious would ſtop at nothing to effect her ruin.

While meditating on the means moſt likely to effect it, ſhe ſaw the two horſemen paſs by the chaiſe who had attracted her fears the firſt part of her journey.

Hopes began to dawn upon her heart. "They cannot be enemies likewiſe," breathed ſhe to

herſelf—"ſomething whiſpers me they are ſent to my relief. But how ſhall I make them a ſignal of diſtreſs?" At that moment, one of them rode up to the chaiſe, and bade the driver on his peril to proceed farther.

All thoſe fears which naturally ariſe at the idea of being robbed, were driven to flight by thinking of an adverſary ſtill more to be dreaded than a highwayman; for a piſtol at her boſom would not have appeared more tremendous to her than the preſence of Sir William: but while ſhe was calmly feeling for her purſe (which ſhe every moment expected would be demanded, for ſhe no longer doubted their being really robbers) her companion, leſs prepared for a ſud-

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den diſſolution, ſcreamed out for mercy, and endeavoured to ſcreen herſelf from danger by puſhing Emily forward in the chaiſe, and leaning along the ſeat behind her.

The drivers ſtopped, and one of the ſuppoſed highwaymen approached the door of the chaiſe; and not without ſome little degree of trepidation, Miſs Weſtbrook extended the hand in which ſhe held her purſe, but was ſurpriſed to hear herſelf addreſſed by her name, in a voice ſhe never recollected having heard before.

"We are not robbers, Miſs Weſtbrook," ſaid the foremoſt of the ſtrangers, "but friends come to ſecure you from the hands of villainy. Excuſe a farther explanation at this time, and permit us

us to conduct you to some place of safety, till you are sufficiently recovered from your fright to pursue your journey."

"Joyfully!" said the grateful girl, "take me, generous strangers any where you please: on your protection do I throw myself. I can have no apprehensions of falling into more dishonourable hands than those from which I escape." And in the height of her satisfaction, she was going to jump from the chaise; when her duenna, relieved from her fears of death, caught hold of her cloak, and forbade her to attempt it, for nothing should prevail on her to suffer her to leave her; and she immediately called to the postillions to assist her.

"We

"We will ſee that, Madam," ſaid her deliverers. "But, on ſecond thoughts, you ſhall have your own way.—Miſs Weſtbrook ſhall not leave the carriage. — A little exerciſe, dame, will do you good; you may therefore alight as ſoon as you pleaſe, and foot it to your employer as faſt as you are able, to acquaint him of your ſucceſs." On finding her refractory, they inſiſted on the drivers lifting her by force out of the chaiſe, and ſetting her down in the road (which was ſome miles from any town) and then ordered them to remount their horſes, and drive back to the place whence they ſet out, more expeditiouſly, if poſſible, than they came; and to quiet poor Emily's apprehenſions of farther danger,

they

they rode on each ſide of the carriage themſelves.

On arriving at the inn, they diſcharged the chaiſe, and generouſly rewarded the men for their expedition; but enjoined them, as they valued their lives, to take it back immediately to its owner; and ſhould any future enquiries be made by the gentleman who hired it, to ſay that the young lady was met by ſome of her friends, who had taken her away with them: but even that intelligence they wiſhed Sir William not to gain till Miſs Weſtbrook was ſafe under the protection of her relations—and therefore ſuffered them to ſtay no longer than juſt to bait their horſes, before they ſet out for London; for fear, that diſappointed

pointed of meeting her, the Baronet ſhould come on to the place where he had appointed his vile procureſs to intercept her journey, and from the intelligence of the drivers learn the road they had taken, purſue her, and diſcover who were her deliverers: a ſecret they wiſhed never to tranſpire.

Our Knights Errant now threw off their grazier's coats and cut wigs, (for while under that diſguiſe it would have been impoſſible even for their moſt intimate friends to have known them) and the one diſcovered himſelf to be Medway, who introduced his companion under the character of Lord Darnly, a brother of Lady Palmerſon, whom Miſs Weſtbrook had never ſeen before. He had been

been but a few days returned from his travels, and on being acquainted with his friend's intention of following Emily, inſiſted on bearing him company.

"From the intimacy which ſubſiſted between us," ſaid Medway, "you will not be ſurpriſed, Miſs Weſtbrook, that I ſhould be acquainted with Sir William's criminal partiality for you; but he had too much policy to acquaint any one with his iniquitous plan of way-laying you on your journey. However, as I was conſcious of his enterpriſing ſpirit, his abſence from London, at the time of your departure, rendered me ſuſpicious of ſome foul deſign, and I was reſolved, if poſſible, to prevent its taking place. I doubt

not

not but my queſtions on the ſubject of your journey muſt appear to you very impertinent; but as I only ſuſpected and was not certain of ſuch a ſcheme, I was not permitted to explain my motives, and therefore adopted the plan of following you, as the only one by which I could acquire a certain information of your arriving ſafe at Glendor. Had you met with no interruption on your journey, we ſhould have returned as we came, without diſcovering ourſelves; but as the event proved as I expected, it is neceſſary you ſhould know you are under the protection of friends, whoſe farther ſervices you may command, and on whoſe honour, I flatter myſelf, you may rely with ſafety. No one knows of

this

this undertaking but ourſelves, and as nothing is more ſubject to miſrepreſentation than an affair of this kind, it will be better to avoid its becoming a ſubject of public converſation. I would immediately demand ſatisfaction of Sir William for his breach of virtue and hoſpitality; but a father, or a brother, is the only perſon who could with propriety take ſuch a ſtep. The world is too apt to be cenſorious, and female reputation too delicate to be trifled with. Such a mode of reſentment would lay your character at the mercy of every ſcandalous *coterie*; for nothing ſo little redounds to a lady's honour as a duel on her account. It will therefore be moſt prudent to let the matter ſink into oblivion.

Sir

Sir William will be ſufficiently mortified at the loſs of you to need any greater puniſhment, and ſuch a proceeding will not only ſave Lady Bloomer from the heart-rending pangs which muſt naturally attend a knowledge of her huſband's infidelity; but, if he has any degree of ſenſibility, fill him with more remorſe than any other mode of reſentment. When a little recovered from your fatigue, if ſuch a plan meets your approbation, we will ſee you ſafe to Glendor, and then return to London, without any one's having a ſuſpicion of what has happened."

Miſs Weſtbrook thanked her deliverers in the warmeſt terms of gratitude. But though entirely of Medway's opinion in regard to keeping

keeping the affair as ſecret as poſſible (knowing the uneaſineſs it would give to the Baronet's family and her own) was much hurt to think of their returning back, without receiving from her friends thoſe civilities and thanks which their generous conduct ſo juſtly entitled them to.

They ſtayed only to take a haſty diſh of chocolate, and ſoon as a chaiſe could be got ready, handed their fair charge into it, and purſued their journey in the ſame order as before.

The attention of Lord Darnly had been ſo totally engaged in contemplating the charms of Emily, that he had hardly broke ſilence during their ſhort repaſt; but they had proceeded only a few yards

on

on the road before he ſufficiently atoned for his taciturnity by a thouſand elogiums on her beauty, and with that frankneſs which is natural to a generous mind, aſked Medway whether it was love or friendſhip that actuated his conduct? "Though (reſumed his Lordſhip) I need not put that queſtion; for it is hardly poſſible to be diſintereſted, where the object is amiable as Miſs Weſtbrook."

"I will confeſs (replied his friend with equal candor) that I am not ſo diſintereſted as I could wiſh to be, and as I endeavour to appear; for from the firſt hour of beholding this lovely girl, my heart avowed her influence, and flattered itſelf, a farther acquaintance might produce on her part, ſimilar

ſimilar ſentiments: but the deluſion quickly vaniſhed, on perceiving her's perfectly devoid of thoſe emotions which agitated mine, whenever I approached her. On indifferent matters, ſhe would converſe with all the eaſe and familiarity of a long eſtabliſhed friendſhip; but whenever the ſubject turned on love, all her complacency forſook her, and for days after I was ſhunned. I had but one conſolation under this misfortune, and that was, ſhe did not ſmile upon others, and frown on me. For among all the crowd of idolators who environed her ſteps, not one appeared to attract her particular attention. She either is devoid of tender paſſions, though ſhe poſſeſſes the humane ones to an extreme

extreme degree — or has not yet beheld the object who is to awaken them: and I have too much reſpect for her, as well as conſideration for myſelf, to importune her on the only topic which appears to offend her, and render my ſociety unpleaſing. Her happineſs will ever be the primary wiſh of my ſoul. To promote it, I would ſacrifice my own; and to ſave her virtue from becoming the prey of a deſigning villain, would joyfully yield my life. In leaving her I ſhall quit my heart's firſt treaſure; but were not the motives I have alledged ſufficient to determine me on returning, when we have ſeen her ſafe to Glendor, I have a wiſh ſtill more powerful, in thruſting myſelf on her ſociety at this

time: I might ſeem to lay claim to her gratitude; and that is a tax I ſhould be very unhappy to burthen her with, for a ſervice any man of honour, who had known the ſnares which were prepared for her, might as readily have offered as myſelf."

"I congratulate you on your philoſophy, Charles, (replied his Lordſhip) but in truth I cannot boaſt ſo great a ſhare of it. I am glad, however, you have been candid enough to own to me the true ſtate of your affections, or I might have been tempted to have enliſted myſelf among the train of her admirers; for, I muſt confeſs, I never yet beheld a woman, to whom, on firſt ſight, my heart was ſo inclinable to reſign its freedom. But I will not truſt myſelf with another peep at her faſcinating

ting face, now I am honoured with your confidence; for I ſhould be ſorry that the loſs of my heart ſhould be accompanied with the loſs of honour. Our friendſhip has been too long eſtabliſhed to be broken by a woman."

"I truſt it has, my Lord. And were it not of ſuch ancient date, I ſhould have no apprehenſions of its being ſhaken by our ſentiments happening to be ſimilar. Believe me, I am not that ſelfiſh animal to envy a friend the happineſs I cannot enjoy myſelf. Though I happen not to be the man ſo bleſt as to awaken the ſenſibility of Emily Weſtbrook, I cannot ſuppoſe ſhe will long preſerve her indifference for the ſex in general. Some happy man will, doubtleſs, plead his paſſion more ſucceſsfully;

and why ſhould it not be you, as well as any other? I am not one of thoſe faſhionable lovers that would run you through the body for being preferred. She has an undoubted right to diſpoſe of her affections—and, next to enjoying them myſelf, it would be my greateſt felicity to ſee them placed on a deſerving object."

No more paſſed at that time: but it was quite ſufficient to acquit Lord Darnly afterwards of having endeavoured to ſupercede his friend in the affections of Miſs Weſtbrook; for as one had ingenuouſly confeſſed himſelf much ſtruck with her perſon, and the other owned that no encouragement had been given him to believe that his addreſſes would be favourably

favourably received (however partially inclined towards her) the path of happineſs to both was open: and as both poſſeſſed an almoſt equal ſhare of perſonal merit, their good or ill ſucceſs depended wholly on her opinion; or perhaps, more on the caprice of fate, which generally appears moſt prevalent in matrimonial connections, than any other occurrences of life—and juſtifies that old, though low adage, that marriage and hanging go by deſtiny.

Had inclination alone dictated, his Lordſhip would gladly have introduced himſelf to the family of Miſs Weſtbrook immediately; but as that was totally inconſiſtent with their preſent plan of opera-

tions, he was conſtrained to imitate the moderation of his friend.

They accompanied Emily within ſight of the family manſion, wiſhed her every happineſs, and then (as was propoſed) after a polite and friendly leave, turned their horſes back towards the metropolis, and left her quite enchanted with their generous and diſintereſted conduct, which had ſhewn itſelf more conſpicuouſly in their delicate attention to her reputation than even in the perſonal ſervice they had rendered her.

The treachery of Sir William, and the generoſity and diſintereſted behaviour of Medway, were now moſt ſtrikingly contraſted in her mind. She began to be convinced, that the gay world had indeed many

dangers

dangers for the inexperienced and unwary; that its pleasures were blended with mortifications and disappointments; peculiarly so to those who had charms sufficient to attract its admiration: yet so pleasing was the voice of flattery become, that she could not wish herself less lovely, but that her personal attractions were accompanied by a fortune sufficient to admit of its indulgencies, and a rank exalted enough to deter the eye of libertinism from daring to look up to her. That any one should have done so, inflicted the severest pangs, and left a field for self-examination, that (though probably she had never intentionally given the Baronet room to form any hopes of encouragement) would have ended

in ſelf-reproach; for a retroſpection of our conduct very frequently ſhews it to us in a different point of view. But in the midſt of this chaos of reflection, the chaiſe ſtopped; and at a moment in which ſuch happineſs was little expected by her friends, ſhe tript through the avenue, and entering the hall door unheard, was in the arms of them before any of the ſervants had time to announce her arrival.

Joy at thus unexpectedly beholding her, for a time ſuſpended all enquiries concerning the motives of her return; but that joy was ſoon ſucceeded by a fear, that her ſudden appearance at the farm was occaſioned by ſome diſagreeable event.

To their tender interrogations on that head, ſhe replied, that as Lady Bloomer was not perfectly recovered from her lying-in, and propoſed lengthening the period of her abode in town much beyond her firſt intentions, the wiſh of ſeeing her father had predominated too powerfully in her mind to ſuffer her to continue ſo long abſent from home, and induced her to prevail on her ladyſhip to permit her to return alone. To have been more explicit would, ſhe was ſenſible, have overwhelmed them in apprehenſions for her future ſafety; and would alſo have inflicted the greateſt uneaſineſs on the mind of the amiable Selina, who was preſent at her arrival. As it was a ſecret that would have

conveyed general unhappineſs to her friends, ſhe determined to confine it to her own boſom, unleſs ſelf-preſervation rendered ſuch a diſcovery neceſſary to ſecure her from the future attacks of Sir William, or to vindicate her innocence ſhould any malignant aſperſion enſue, in conſequence of his diſappointment.

Another inducement for ſecreſy in this affair (equally forcible as the former ones) was, that natural repugnance every female experiences, at being conſtrained to confeſs that conviction has followed the good advice of her friends.—To have formed a favourable opinion of any one, and find it not juſtified on a more intimate acquaintance, ſeems a reproach on our

our judgment, and to a ſuſceptible and delicate mind is productive of infinite mortification.

Deceptions, it muſt be allowed, are unjuſtifiable: but thoſe which tend to the preſervation of general harmony among friends, are far leſs deſerving of reprobation than any other ſpecies of duplicity. To have eſcaped from the ſnares of the ſeducer, was ſufficient ſatisfaction to Emily, without attempting any mode of reſentment that might probably have leſs effect upon its object, than upon the worthy part of his family. Whenever any queſtions were advanced, that might tend to unravel the cauſe of her returning ſo much earlier than was expected, ſhe evaded them with the greateſt

circumſpection; and far from ſuſpecting that ſhe had been driven from the gaieties of London by the moſt cruel attack upon her virtue, both Louiſa and Miſs Bloomer were happy in thinking, that filial affection had ſo far triumphed over her love of pleaſure, as to prompt a return while the ſeaſon for public diverſions was yet in its meridian, and flattered themſelves that diſſipation had leſs ſway over her heart, than their fears had ſuggeſted, and the ſcarcity of her letters had before perſuaded them.

The happineſs of finding her father ſo much better than when ſhe left him, was certainly great; yet notwithſtanding all her endeavours to appear happy, a ſigh of regret would ſometimes eſcape her,

her, on recollection of thoſe elegant amuſements ſhe had been conſtrained to ſacrifice for the leſs animated pleaſures of a rural life: but as her return was ſuppoſed voluntary, ſhe tried to ſtifle her diſſatisfaction as much as poſſible; nor had ſhe indeed much leiſure for their indulgence, as her friends around her, united in their efforts of chaſing melancholy from her heart, by a ſucceſſion of innocent amuſements, and by an appearance of content and happineſs in themſelves: which proved truly to her that happineſs conſiſts chiefly in idea. This thought inſpired her with the moſt ardent wiſh, that her deſires were more circumſcribed, or that Providence had placed her in a

ſphere

ſphere of life in which ſhe might have indulged them with more prudence.

I ſhall now leave her ſafe under the paternal roof, and return with my readers to the place where Sir William was waiting impatiently for her arrival, little imagining ſhe had eſcaped from his ſnares, and was happy in the boſom of her worthy friends; much leſs did he ſuggeſt to whom ſhe owed the bleſſing of her deliverance.

After waiting ſome hours longer than the time in which he expected to have ſeen her, he began to fear that ſome evil genius had fruſtrated his deſigns, or that ſome accident had happened on the road that occaſioned the delay: but the latter ſuggeſtion predominated moſt

moſt powerfully, as he pleaſed himſelf with having formed his plan too politically for human foreſight to prevent.

With the utmoſt anxiety and impatience did he keep his eyes fixed upon the road, where he expected momentarily, to ſee the carriage which was to convey to him his wiſhes; but the joy which every diſtant ſound of wheels threw upon his heart, was as quickly diſſipated on their near approach. In ſhort, no Emily appearing, and unable any longer to combat his impatience, he ordered a chaiſe, and ſet out in hopes of meeting her on the way.

It will not be difficult to form an idea of his painful ſenſations during this ſuſpence, (for the bad are far leſs able to ſuſtain a diſappointment

pointment than the good) but it is no eaſy matter to conceive how much they were encreaſed, on ſeeing, at a little diſtance from the road, a female toiling through the dirt, who greatly reſembled the wretch he had employed to convey to him his lovely prey. Recovering himſelf in a few ſeconds, from his firſt ſurprize, he judged it to be impoſſible to be her—he would not encourage ſuch a diſtracting thought; but a nearer approach confirmed the mortifying truth that it was no other. He called to the driver to ſtop, and the fat bundle of iniquity, on hearing his well-known voice, waddled through the mire, and exhibited, at the ſide of the chaiſe, a figure that, in ſpite of his diſappointment,

pointment, gave birth to the moſt riſible inclinations.

Her bloated countenance and prominent features (rendered haggard by fatigue, and ſpeckled over with dirt) were variegated by a diverſity of ſcratches which ſhe had got by ſcrambling through the hedges to avoid the mire; and her cloaths half torn from off her back, and hanging in tatters about her, added to the loſs of both her ſhoes, which ſhe had left behind her in a ſlough, compleated a ſpectacle the moſt laughable and ridiculous that can poſſibly be conceived.

The Baronet, without paying any attention to her fatigue or perſonal misfortunes, which ſhe bewailed moſt lamentably, aſked in

a me-

a menacing tone, what was become of Miſs Weſtbrook, (not doubting but ſhe was hard by in ſimilar plight) and execrated her moſt heartily for truſting her charge a moment out of her ſight; but his anger was conſiderably aggravated on learning the ſource from whence her diſtreſſes originated, and that Emily was not only exempt from the like, but by that time many miles out of his reach, and moſt probably under the protection of her relations; for the old beldam averred, that ſhe was reſcued by two men who had every appearance of country farmers—and who, ſhe was almoſt certain, came from the village where Miſs Weſtbrook lived, by her willingneſs to accompany them.

After

After an innundation of curſes for her ill management, and more for not concealing from Emily by whoſe orders ſhe was ſeduced out of the road to Glendor, he permitted her to ſeat herſelf by him in the chaiſe, but conveyed her only to the next town; and making her an inconſiderable preſent, left her there to repair her perſonal injuries, and return to London at her leiſure.

As to himſelf, he knew not what courſe to purſue. Not more mortified at his defeat than the thoughts of its becoming a public topic of converſation, if no worſe conſequences enſued, (for he could not think the friends of Miſs Weſtbrook would ſuffer ſuch a breach of hoſpitality to paſs unre-

unredreſſed) he had almoſt determined on a tour to the Continent, that he might, by abſence, wear away the remembrance of his diſappointment, and eſcape the reproaches of his Lady, who, he knew, would be equally hurt at the inſult offered to the virtue of her friend, as at his infidelity to herſelf: but the wiſh of learning in what light this affair would be repreſented, by a world that delights in exaggeration, predominated too powerfully to ſuffer him to put his deſign in execution, till he had written to Medway, from whom he expected to hear whether the account of his diſhonourable intentions had yet reached London, and what effect it had upon his Lady.

The

The firſt thing which was preſented that worthy young man Medway, when Lord Darnly and he returned from their expedition, was this letter from Sir William; and though he deſpiſed the libertine principles of the Baronet, and, could he have ſuffered ſingly, would have been glad that he ſhould have felt even greater pangs than thoſe inflicted by his diſappointment; yet he was happy to think the affair would end without any uneaſineſs to Lady Bloomer, or the friends of his adored Emily, whoſe reputation he would have defended with his life had it been neceſſary, but was much better ſatisfied to know that from the privacy with which this baſe ſcheme had been conducted, it would probably

bably never become an object of public ſcrutiny.

He firſt called on her Ladyſhip, to diſcover if any thing had tranſpired, for ill news generally travels with eagle's ſwiftneſs, while good halts at every ſtage; but he found her gay as uſual—no clouds ſeemed to hang over her mind, but what had ariſen from the loſs of her lively friend, whoſe abſence ſhe appeared to regret more than that of Sir William's, who, (in the courſe of converſation) ſhe told him, would, ſhe imagined, continue at Newmarket but a few days longer, as ſhe had received no letters ſince he had been gone, and he never would have neglected writing if he had not been in momentary expectation of ſeeing her.

It was plain no ſuſpicions had ariſen, and he took his leave; happy in an opportunity of acquainting his worthleſs correſpondent, that he might give over all thoughts of a voyage to the Continent, and return to the ſociety of his friends without any reproaches, but thoſe of his own conſcience.

He wrote to him the ſame evening; and though he expreſſed his diſapprobation of his conduct to Miſs Weſtbrook in the warmeſt terms, and endeavoured by the ſtrongeſt arguments to convince him of the folly and cruelty of ſuch purſuits, as they might tend not only to the deſtruction of their object, but involve whole families in ruin, told him, he did not believe

lieve her relations would attempt any retaliation for the outrage, though he truly deſerved it; but content themſelves in having ſaved her from his diſhonourable attempts, without ſeeking to return the injury by expoſing her reputation to the voice of calumny.—He added, that it depended wholly on himſelf whether the matter ſhould become a public topic, or ſink into total oblivion, as nothing had yet tranſpired; but flattered himſelf, a retroſpection of his conduct would ſufficiently point out its errors, and be a better monitor than his advice:—yet if that was worthy of attention, it would tend to ſhew him the neceſſity of coming immediately to town, to prevent any uneaſineſs on the part of his

his lady; and if her acquaintance with Miſs Weſtbrook ſhould be renewed on their return into the country, to avoid her ſociety as much as poſſible, and endeavour to convince her of his penitence, as the moſt honourable return he could make to both her and her friends, for their diſcretion in ſtifling their reſentment, to preſerve the peace of Lady Bloomer.

As Sir William was not a veteran in vice, though of late he had ſtudied to render himſelf a proficient in it, he ſaw the merit of this counſel; but, unaccuſtomed to controul, he could hardly, with any degree of patience, think of exiſting in the ſame kingdom with the lovely object of his lawleſs wiſhes, without

again attempting to ſecure the poſſeſſion of her; but while ſafe under the protecting eye of her father, and that of the ſtill more vigilant Aubrey, he was conſcious it would be fruitleſs to indulge a thought of it:—he had, therefore, the policy to appear convinced by Medway's arguments, and in a few days returned home, where he was received by his lady with a warmth of affection he but ill deſerved.

Within a few months after this event, from the death of a diſtant relation, Lord Palmerſon became heir to an eſtate of conſiderable value a few miles from Glendor; and her ladyſhip's wiſhes of ſeeing Miſs Emily Weſtbrook (for whom ſhe had the greateſt eſteem) induced

induced her to perſuade her Lord to make it one of their ſummer reſidencies in turn with the family ſeat. Lord Darnly was preſent when this propoſal was made, and could hardly refrain from expreſſing his ſatisfaction (though conſtrained to hide it, for no one knew he had ever ſeen her) as it flattered him with the hope of again feaſting his eyes on thoſe beauties which had inſpired him with the moſt premature, but permanent attachment.

In the height of his joy, he could not help communicating his pleaſurable ſenſations to Medway the next time they met; and the intelligence was received with a degree of compoſure that perſuaded him it would be produc-

tive of no uneaſineſs, ſhould he take advantage of the opportunity to introduce himſelf to her family. No wonder his Lordſhip was deceived by that appearance of ſerenity in his friend; for, in fact, he deceived himſelf, and knew not how ill he could ſupport the idea of her being united to another, though he entertained not the moſt diſtant hope that ſhe ever would be his.

When the verdure of ſpring, and the birds warbling forth their woodland notes, began to animate the face of nature, and invite the gay inhabitants of the buſtling metropolis to partake of its innocent delights, the Palmerſon family repaired to Malvern Mawr; and inſtead of finding an old ruinous

ruinous caſtle, ſurrounded with mouldering walls, and difficult of acceſs from the threatening precipice and formidable hills, found it the moſt beautiful and agreeable receſs that could poſſibly be formed by an uniſon of art and nature.

Its late poſſeſſor had been ſtyled a Miſanthrope, from his long ſecluſion from the world, and a total abjuration of its giddy follies; but if he ſacrificed its empty pleaſures and ſenſeleſs delights, its elegant amuſements and rational enjoyments were ſtill his own — for every apartment bore ſome veſtiges of the moſt expanded genius and active diſpoſition. A variety of drawings, by his own hand, in the moſt maſterly ſtyle

of elegance, ſhewed his ideas not to be contracted with his ſphere of action; and a library, in which the learned, the gay, or grave, might find an ample ſcope for meditation, proved, though he had deſerted the ſociety of mankind, he ſtill held friendly converſe with them in their works, and ſtudied the living manners, not as a ſubject of imitation, but to ſtrengthen him in his opinion, that a retired life afforded greater leiſure for the exerciſe of private virtues, than the grand theatre of the world, in which cuſtom reigns too predominant for the good inclinations of the heart to triumph over the bad ones. In a word, the latter part of his life had been devoted to the practice of piety

and

and good works:—he had lived bleſſing, and was bleſt by all around him; and thoſe few hours of his time which were not employed in the ſervice of benevolence, were paſſed in rational amuſements, or exerciſe conducive to the preſervation of his health. Among the different ſpecies of the latter, his moſt favourite one had been the culture and embelliſhment of an extenſive garden, which rendered his rural abode a ſecond Eden; and at the time when his noble inheritors came to take poſſeſſion, was juſt putting forth its fragrant beauties, and diſplayed to the admiring eye a ſcene of blooming ſweets, ſhedding their reviving odours on all who approached them.

Lady Palmerſon, who wanted only the ſanction of faſhion to render her an admirer of ſylvan ſcenes, was quite enchanted with the acquiſition; and the poſſeſſion of this little *férme orné*, gave her greater ſatisfaction than any ſhe had ever experienced in the moſt coſtly manſions. She was impatient till the approbation of Miſs Emily Weſtbrook helped more to ſtamp its value, and determined to make a viſit to Glendor before ſhe received any company at home.—Her brother heard the orders given for her carriage with delight unutterable; and, as her Lord was engaged with his ſteward, offered to accompany her.

"As you pleaſe," replied her Ladyſhip, ſmiling; "but you muſt

muſt ſteel your heart, Ned. It is not becauſe you are ſo many miles from London you are to expect to meet only bluſhing country girls, ſinking under confuſion at your gaze; but divinities of the moſt elegant form, and their manners as unembarraſſed as their perſons lovely.—At leaſt, I ſpeak from a certainty of one of the ſiſters; and the other, I am told, is not at all inferior."

The heart of Lord Darnly tacitly ſubſcribed to theſe encomiums on the lovely Emily, yet he made no avowal of ever having ſeen her; but told her Ladyſhip, in the ſame vein of pleaſantry, that he ſhould take no pains to ſhield it from their power, as he had brought it uncaptured from

the metropolis, on purpose to bestow it on the first amiable object that thought the bauble worth acceptance. — "*Allons*, then," continued he, "I am prepared to fall; and after having so long withstood the whole artillery of piercing eyes, and dimpling smiles that have laid close siege to my liberty, I shall be inclined to make but faint resistance, should the fair Westbrooks prove half as charming as your Ladyship describes them."

As Emily had never heard of the Palmerson family being in that part of the world, nothing could have surprised her more than her Ladyship's arrival at the farm.

Louisa, Miss Bloomer, and Emily

Emily were all ſeated in the cedar parlour;—the two former employed in embroidering an elegant counterpane, and the latter reading to them a new dramatic publication, on which ſhe was criticiſing as ſhe read, with infinite judgment and vivacity; and on the other ſide of the room ſat Mr. Weſtbrook and his worthy friend, amuſing themſelves with a game at draughts.

On a ſudden Mr. Aubrey obſerved to the company, that a carriage, with attendants in elegant unknown liveries, was driving up the avenue, and bade the ladies prepare themſelves to receive ſome ſtranger of diſtinction. —The ſound of elegant liveries would have been ſufficient to

have rouſed Emily, even from a trance; ſuch effect had grandeur on her mind.—Down went her book, and turning firſt inſtinctively to the glaſs to ſee how ſhe appeared, ſhe flew to the window, and, to her utter aſtoniſhment, ſaw Lord Darnly handing Lady Palmerſon from her coach.

Joy ſparkled on her expreſſive features.—A damſel of old, when delivered from an enchanted caſtle, could not have experienced more pleaſurable ſenſations than did Emily Weſtbrook, on beholding viſiters ſo flattering to her ambition.—In a moment ſhe was at the door.

"My dear Lady Palmerſon, to what fortunate event do I owe the happineſs of ſeeing you here?

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It is an honour I could never have expected."—At the conclusion of this ſhort addreſs, a conſcious bluſh overſpread her face, on a ſuggeſtion, that it was at the inſtigation of Lord Darnly, who, ſhe could not fail obſerving, was very much ſtruck with her perſon when he accompanied Medway in reſcuing her from the hands of Sir William.

"That you ſhall be informed of preſently.—But come, my dear girl, introduce us to your worthy family—I long to be acquainted with them; and my brother is come prepared to leave his heart behind him. I give you this friendly caution, that you may not be at a loſs to know its owner, if you ſhould find ſuch an inſignificant

nificant trifle after our departure, and have no inclination to detain it."

In ſaying this, her Ladyſhip tript into the parlour, followed by her brother; when Emily introduced them to the family group with that eaſy politeneſs, which ever diveſts a firſt acquaintance of the reſerve generally attendant on an introductory viſit. In a few minutes they became as ſocial as if the intimacy had been of a twelvemonth ſtanding: nor was the converſation engroſſed by the ladies only; for both Mr. Aubrey and Mr. Weſtbrook were highly pleaſed with the unreſtrained familiarity of their noble viſitants, and felt towards them thoſe favourable prepoſſeſſions which

which generally terminate in mutual friendſhip.

They made equal progreſs in the good opinion of Miſs Bloomer and Louiſa. The latter had never before beheld a woman ſo agreeable as Lady Palmerſon, or an object ſo pleaſing as Lord Darnly; and, for the firſt time in her life, found ſhe had a heart—but found it only to ſee it depart for ever in the carriage of Lady Palmerſon; while its amiable enſlaver had no eyes for any one but Emily, whoſe ſprightly graces, and pleaſing converſe, rivetted the conqueſt her beauty had before obtained.

It was a pleaſing intelligence to every part of the family to learn, that her Ladyſhip meant to make Malvern Mawr her ſummer's reſidence;

ſidence; and ſhe departed, not without receiving a willing promiſe that their viſit ſhould be ſoon returned, and begged that Miſs Bloomer would make one of their friendly *coterîe*.

It was now the middle of May, and that young lady had heard no news of Sir William's having given orders for the family manſion to be in readineſs againſt their arrival. She wondered at it, eſpecially as Lord and Lady Palmerſon were in the country; but ſhe imagined that they deferred their journey only till after his Majeſty's birth-day:—had ſhe known that the real motive was the dread of encountering the juſt reſentment of the Weſtbrooks, ſhe would have ſincerely wiſhed he might

might never again ſhew his face in Glendor; for ſhe was too great an enemy to vice to forgive a breach of honour, even in a brother, nor would ſhe ever more have acknowledged him as ſuch: —but, happily, ſhe was exempt from the uneaſineſs ſuch a diſcovery would have occaſioned her, by the prudence with which it was concealed.

The moſt friendly intercourſe ſubſiſted between theſe amiable females; and the male part were equally ſocial. Lord Palmerſon, though a votary to pleaſure and diſſipation, found more amuſement in the country than he had ever experienced before; and, in the ſociety of his worthy neighbours, felt a ſatisfaction which he

was

was conſtrained to acknowledge almoſt equal to that he enjoyed with the *bon vivants*, who had, before his retreat from town, engroſſed his hours.

Lord Darnly was pleaſed to obſerve this change in his diſpoſition; for he tenderly eſteemed his ſiſter, and was conſcious her natural good qualities, and domeſtic virtues, had been ſacrificed at the ſhrine of pleaſure, merely in compliance with his Lordſhip's humour; and flattered himſelf ſhe would be much happier than ſhe had ever yet been, if he could be brought to a more rational mode of life.

This young nobleman poſſeſſed every good and amiable qualification.—To ſee others happy, was being

being ſo himſelf.—He had travelled but to deſpiſe the fopperies of the age, and to prefer the downright ſincerity of an Engliſhman, to the fulſome flattery of a foreigner.—He was ſhocked at the manner in which moſt of the nobility proſtitute their time; and though he fell in with ſome of their follies, no perſuaſions could ever prevail on him to adopt their vices.—He formed no ideas of happineſs equal to that of a married life, where the parties were of ſimilar ſentiments; or of wretchedneſs equal to that where they were greatly contraſted.—He flattered himſelf with having a ſufficient ſhare of penetration to avoid ſuch an union as the latter, and was ſanguine enough to hope

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he had met with an object calculated to bless him with all the felicity of the former.

His partiality to Emily was soon visible to every part of her family; nor was it long a secret to his own.—Though a splendid fortune was (according to sordid maxims) wanting to render it an eligible union, they did not attempt to raise any obstacles to prevent it, as the object was the descendant of honourable ancestors, though untitled ones; and, in point of personal accomplishments, formed to dignify the most exalted sphere.

Both her father and Mr. Aubrey were pleased at the happy prospect which seemed to await her.—Not so much for the honour

nour of the alliance, as the thoughts of her being placed in a ſphere of life more calculated to promote her happineſs than the humble vale; a ſphere in which they began to think Providence had ever deſtined her to ſhine, or it would not have created her with thoſe aſpiring wiſhes which had ever marked her conduct.

To define the ſentiments of the gentle Louiſa on this occaſion, is a taſk not quite ſo eaſy.—She rejoiced alſo in her ſiſter's approaching happineſs, but ſhe could not conceive that any part of it could be derived from his Lordſhip's wealth or title. All the felicity that could await on woman, ſhe thought muſt center

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in poſſeſſing the heart of ſo amiable a man:—one, who, in her opinion, would have been equally deſerving of affection, had he boaſted none of thoſe advantages, which, in the eyes of Emily, were his moſt powerful recommendations. Whenever ſhe happened to caſt on him her lovely eyes, ſhe felt herſelf agitated with ſenſations inexplicable, and would haſtily withdraw them, as if conſcious of having committed a crime; for none would ſhe have deemed greater, than that of beholding, with envious wiſhes, the man whom Heaven had deſtined as the huſband of her ſiſter.

"How happy are you, my dear Emily," ſaid ſhe to her one day as they were dreſſing to wait

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on Lady Palmerſon, " in having attracted the attentions of ſuch an eſtimable character as Lord Darnly!—How infinitely ſuperior is he, in point of merit, to Sir William Bloomer; and, indeed, every other man of quality I ever yet ſaw! — Goodneſs illumines every expreſſive feature; and, if I have any ſkill in developing the human heart, he poſſeſſes one replete with every virtue.—I cannot think how you can hear him with that indifference which ſometimes is diſcernable in your behaviour, even amidſt his tendereſt attentions to you. It is cruel to trifle with the happineſs of a man who lives but in your ſmiles; and who, I am perſuaded, is valuable to your heart."

" His

"His Lordſhip is much obliged to you, my dear," replied Emily, laughing, "for being ſo warm an advocate in his cauſe. I acknowledge he poſſeſſes all the merit you aſcribe to him; but were it tinctured with a greater degree of ſpirits, he would be a far more agreeable companion. It is a thouſand pities he had not diſcernment enough to make choice of your ſedate ladyſhip; for I am ſure you would have proved by far the moſt eligible helpmate:—but as chance has thrown him and his title at my feet, I muſt accept the gift; though I muſt be candid enough to acknowledge, that had the offer been unaccompanied by that alluring appendage, I ſhould have

been

been little tempted to have yielded up to him my precious freedom."

"Giddy girl!" exclaimed Louisa, astonished at this confession. "Is it possible you can be insensible to the innumerable attractions that adorn the title on which you place your happiness? If so, Lord Darnly is deserving of a better fate—but I cannot believe these are your genuine sentiments."

A deep sigh accompanied these words; and any one, who had been less engrossed by those splendid ideas which filled the mind of Emily, might have discovered, that from her own sensations she judged of hers.

During their drive to Malvern Mawr, in which they were accompanied by Miss Bloomer, the subject was again brought upon the

tapis, and Selina's encomiums on his Lordſhip were proportioned to Miſs Weſtbrook's. She had heard ſuch a character of him, for ſobriety, benevolence, and all their attendant virtues, from an old Lady who viſited her aunt, that ſhe could not help congratulating Emily as the moſt fortunate of women.

"My ſiſter ought to think herſelf ſo indeed, (ſaid Louiſa) but there is in this world ever ſomething wanting to compleat our happineſs. Lord Darnly would be more agreeable to her if he poſſeſſed a greater degree of livelineſs; while that very deficiency is, in my opinion, his greateſt merit: for a vivacious, rattling lover, would have little chance of gaining my eſteem,

eſteem, or of impreſſing me with a belief that his own profeſſions of affection were ſincere. It is, however, a proof that he is no enemy to vivacity (though his heart may at preſent yield to more gentle impulſes) by his attachment to one who ſo much abounds with it."

"True, my dear," replied Selina, "and I think that ſerioufneſs which diſpleaſes her, is the greateſt proof he can give your ſiſter of his tenderneſs and ſincerity: for the heart, ſoftened by love, is ſeldom, I believe, the abode of mirth."

"You both expatiate moſt feelingly on the ſubject (interrupted Emily) but my dear girls, a truce to your encomiums, and believe that I am equally ſenſible of Lord

Darnly's merit as yourſelves; but the moſt amiable qualifications affect not all hearts alike. I will not diſown that I have ſeen the man whom I ſhould prefer to him, yet no vivacious rattling fop, but a mortal as ſedate and unfaſhionably virtuous as himſelf; but, alas! he wants thoſe ſplendid recommendations which give his Lordſhip a claim to preference, and therefore he is thought of as one whom I have never ſeen."

"Good Heavens! (cried Louiſa) is it poſſible you ſhould ever, my dear Emily, have ſeen a man more deſerving of affection than his Lordſhip, and yet flatter him with the idea of his being deareſt to you on earth? for ſurely he muſt think ſo, or he would not be ſo anxious

anxious to unite his fate with yours."

"I do not say, my dear, that I have seen one more deserving, but one whose manners and person have made a greater impression on my mind, though prudence forbids me to listen to his addresses. Opinion, you know, is every thing in these affairs. But I flatter myself, though I am not desperately in love with Lord Darnly, I shall make him as happy as most married men are, and prove myself as deserving the distinction as any female he could have fixed on in this trifling age. And besides, experience will inform us, that the most violent love is not always the most durable."

"And yet, Emily (returned

Miſs Bloomer) "I will lay my life you would not marry any one of inferior rank without feeling for him more than a luke-warm paſſion."

"You ſcrutinize too nicely, Selina—that is a ſubject on which I have not yet beſtowed any very ſerious reflections."

More could not then be ſaid; the carriage ſtopped at Lord Palmerſon's, and his amiable brother was ready to hand the Ladies from it.

"I have been dying with the head-ach (ſaid his Lordſhip to Emily, in a half whiſper as he led her to the houſe) and nothing but your enlivening preſence could have power to draw me from my chamber."

This ſpeech was not articulated ſo low as to eſcape Louiſa, and

conveyed

conveyed inſtantly to her heart a pain equally poignant as that he complained of in his head. Her gentle ſoul was ever tremblingly alive to every tender feeling. An animal in diſtreſs would have excited her ſympathy; but to hear the man in whoſe happineſs ſhe found herſelf ſo greatly intereſted, complain of illneſs, was ſufficient to overwhelm her with melancholy the remainder of the day.

After dinner, the company (which conſiſted of ſeveral other agreeable families in the neighbourhood of Malvern Mawr) retired into the garden; and as the weather was unuſually warm for the early ſeaſon of the year, Lady Palmerſon ordered the tea equipage to be brought into one of the

pavilions, and with it a card table, for the amuſement of thoſe who were not diſpoſed for a ramble.

Moſt of the younger portion of the company were ſcattered in little parties, over the moſt beautiful and romantic ſpot of earth that ever was cultivated by the hand of art, while thoſe leſs charmed with vernal ſcenes, had formed a party at quadrille; when on a ſudden, the ſerenity of the latter was diſturbed by diſtant ſounds of diſtreſs, which ſeemed to iſſue from a retired part of the garden.

In a few minutes all the company were aſſembled at the ſpot from whence the cries proceeded, and arrived juſt time enough to ſee Lord Darnly in the midſt of the canal, dragging a young woman

out of it, to all appearance lifeleſs; while Emily, fearing his health would fall a ſacrifice to his humanity, was ſcreaming loudly for aſſiſtance.

Louiſa and her friend were foremoſt of the company, and the former no ſooner beheld this ſcene of woe, than ſhe ſunk ſenſeleſs on the graſs, and exhibited a ſpectacle almoſt as pitiable as that which had induced his Lordſhip to plunge into the water.

The body of the fair ſuicide was conveyed by the ſervants to the houſe, while the attentions of Lady Palmerſon, Emily, and Miſs Bloomer were wholly engroſſed in endeavouring to effect the revival of Louiſa; but for ſome minutes all attentions were in vain:

at length she opened her lovely eyes, and casting them wildly round her, articulated some unintelligible words, and then closed them as before. Lord Darnly (who had sustained no other injury than wetting his cloaths) was uniting his efforts with the rest, and in the most soothing language endeavouring to recall Louisa's wandering senses; when his sister observed that he would catch cold if he did not immediately change his dress. "Do, pray my Lord, retire from the garden," continued her Ladyship, "and leave the care of Miss Westbrook to us females. She will soon, I hope, be better. See the colour begins to reanimate her lips! If we can but once make her sensible that you are safe,

ſafe, all will be well: for I really believe ſhe was affected more from apprehenſions of your danger, than any thing elſe. The dear girl is poſſeſſed of ſuch a ſympathetic heart, that ſhe feels as much from *imaginary*, as from *real* misfortunes. It is happy that Emily has greater ſpirits."

Her Ladyſhip pronounced this with a peculiar energy. Her brother's happineſs was very dear to her; and fond as ſhe was of Emily Weſtbrook, ſhe had diſcernment enough to ſee that he was not regarded by her with that degree of tenderneſs he might have been by Louiſa, had his fate deſtined him to have beheld her with an equal ſhare of partiality.

Their united efforts at length

reſtored her to life; when, with an agitation which proved how greatly ſhe was intereſted in the enquiry, the firſt ſentence ſhe uttered was, "How is Lord Darnly? I hope he will not be the victim of his humanity! I have cauſed a deal of trouble, but indeed I could not help it, I trembled ſo at his danger. If he had been drowned, what a loſs to his friends—what a misfortune to my ſiſter! As it is, I fear his health will receive much injury, ill as he was before too—Leave me, dear Emily, and ſee if you can render him any ſervice; he ſtands far more in need of it than I do. I am well now—and your attentions will be ſo conſolatory to him! All this attendance on me has, I fear, robbed him of that

that assistance he perhaps required. Come, let us go in, I can walk now;" and leaning her trembling arm upon Selina's, they were all directing their course towards the house, when they beheld his Lordship coming up the walk to meet them.

The sight of him, apparently no worse for the accident, threw a gleam of pleasure over Louisa's languid features, but her confusion and agitation of spirits, when he expressed his concern for having been the cause of her indisposition, almost reduced her to the same state again; for it led her to fear she had betrayed too much the situation of her heart, and the idea overwhelmed her with shame.

To banish any suspicions of that nature,

nature, ſhe endeavoured to appear more compoſed: and, little as ſhe had been accuſtomed to diſſimulation, made ſo many enquiries, and appeared ſo very much intereſted in the fate of the young woman who had been the unfortunate cauſe of all this confuſion, that it muſt have been a nice diſcerner who could have diſcovered whether her recent emotions had been produced by the natural feelings of humanity, or a particular intereſt in the ſafety of the object who had attempted her preſervation.

The converſation then became general, and all appeared anxious to learn the motives of this raſh action, but were obliged for a time to ſuſpend their curioſity, as his Lordſhip

Lordſhip was equally a ſtranger to the cauſe as themſelves. All he had learnt, when he went in to change his cloaths, was, that ſhe was the daughter of one of his brother's tenants, and was married but a few days before. He had given orders, he ſaid, that her parents and huſband ſhould be informed of the fatal cataſtrophe, and, till their arrival, no reaſons could with juſtice be aſſigned for her having committed this deſperate act, though various ones had been ſpoken of by the domeſtics, as ſoon as the body was carried into the houſe.

"And who has undertaken to convey the mournful intelligence to theſe unfortunate people? (aſked Louiſa with a ſympathetic ſigh) it ſhould not be the taſk of an unfeeling heart."

"You

"You may be ſure, my dear," replied Emily, "that his Lordſhip has employed a proper perſon. But come, let us return to the pavilion, it is proper to change the ſubject till a cup of coffee has reſtored your ſpirits, or your health will be injured by an indulgence of your melancholy reflections."

"The emotions, and tender feelings of your ſiſter on this occaſion (ſaid his Lordſhip) do honour to her heart. Nevertheleſs, I am, my dear Emily, of your opinion, that it is neceſſary to reſtrain them". And taking an arm of each, he led them to the tea-table, where her Ladyſhip was already ſeated with the greateſt part of her company.

Had not the heart of Lord Darn-

ly

ly been fortified with the tendereſt affection for her ſiſter, it certainly muſt have yielded to the delicate beauties, and intereſting ſenſibility which accompanied every word and action of the ſweet Louiſa: but his whole ſoul was engroſſed by the faſcinating livelineſs of the former, though there were ſeaſons, in which he moſt ſincerely wiſhed her ſprightlineſs was tempered with a little of that gentleneſs which ſo ſtrongly characterized the latter.

He felt for Emily the moſt ardent and enthuſiaſtic paſſion, for Louiſa all the tenderneſs and affection of a brother; and, next to that of her ſiſter, was more intereſted in her happineſs than of any perſon living. Had he poſ-

ſeſſed

ſeſſed that vanity which taints the character of moſt young men of the age, he could not have been inſenſible of the impreſſion he had made on her gentle heart; but leſs vain of his own perfections, than to imagine their influence ſo extenſive, he had no idea of being honoured by her with a warmer attachment than that of friendſhip, and was pleaſed with that diſtinction, from the laudable ſource of being approved by the deareſt relative of his beloved Emily.

After tea, Lady Palmerſon, with her three young friends, took an opportunity of withdrawing while the reſt of the company were engaged in obſervations on ſome diſtant proſpects; and giving Lord Darnly

Darnly the hint to follow them, they went into the houſe, to learn if the friends of the unfortunate young woman were yet arrived.

On entering the hall, they found the afflicted parents weeping over the body of their ill-fated child. Her huſband, unable to ſupport the affecting ſcene, had ſhut himſelf up in his room, and awaited their return with the corpſe of his beloved Nancy, to brood in private over his woes: for though want of mutual affection had rendered their marriage inauſpicious, he ſincerely loved her, and to have preſerved her life would have ſacrificed his own.

From the weeping mother they learnt, that ſhe had been long loved by a young man in the neighbourhood,

bourhood, who boasted no possessions but industry and an honest heart. "My poor Nancy," continued the sobbing parent, "was too sensible of his worth; but his want of money was a hindrance to the match. She had pride enough to disdain the thoughts of being a poor man's wife; and tho' she loved him to her soul, would not encourage his suit. That she might quite drive him from her thoughts, she went to all the fairs and every place of merriment, wherever she was invited, and we loved her too well to contradict her in any thing she had a mind to do. At one of those places, a topping farmer, whose name is Peat, fell in love with her (excuse me, ladies, for praising my own child;

child; but even in death you may ſee ſhe had as pretty a face as one ſhall look on in a ſummer's day) and as he was a well-looking young man, and had a power of money, ſhe thought ſhe could not do better than marry him, as it would ſet her above half the girls in the pariſh; and therefore, about a month ago, the bands were put up, and they were married laſt week. As her huſband ſeemed very fond of her, we hoped ſhe would be happy; but as pride, more than value for the young fellow, had prevailed on her to liſten to his courtſhip, it was hardly to be expected that ſhe ſhould. We however pleaſed ourſelves at her being ſettled ſo much beyond our expectations; but there is no happineſs to be depended on

on in this world! Our poor Nancy was yeſterday morning trimming up a new ſilk gown, and making a fine wired cap to make her appearance in at church next Sunday (pleaſing herſelf, no doubt, all the while at the envy it would occaſion among our farmers daughters) when a young woman came into the houſe, and throwing herſelf on a chair, — I have heard ſad news, Mrs. Peat (ſaid ſhe) they ſay young Goodman has hung himſelf in the great tythe-barn, behind the church.—They ſay too, it's for love of you.—He liſted himſelf for a ſoldier laſt week, but his friends bought him off, though it coſt them almoſt all the money they had in the world:—but he was determined, if he could not die by

other

other peoples hands, to die by his own, and ſo has even done it in the ſad manner I have told you.— If it was for love of you, what a ſin you muſt have to anſwer for! I am ſure I would not be in your ſkin for all the money maſter Peat has, for I ſhould expect Goodman's ghoſt to haunt me every where!

" My poor girl, you muſt think, ladies, was in a ſad taking; ſhe ſwooned away, and they were forced to ſend for me. I drove the ſaucy ſlut out of doors, that ſo brutiſhly told her of this ſad diſaſter, and did all I could to recover my poor child before her huſband came in; for I thought her taking it ſo to heart would make words between them.

" When

"When she recovered, a thorough fit of crying seemed to take the load off of her mind, and she seemed pretty easy all the rest of the day; but her husband says, she could not rest all night, but started every minute, as if she was frightened. She dined with me to day, and, as I thought, left me to go home about four o'clock; but instead of that she went directly to master Goodman's, and after looking at the corpse of his son, and crying over it, turned her steps towards my Lord's fish-pond, and threw herself into the water when there was none at hand to save her.—See, ladies, to what an untimely end her pride has brought her!--but for that, she had still been alive and happy."—Here

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the poor woman ended her tragic tale, and poured torrents of tears over the body of her child.

Though delivered in ſuch a ruſtic ſtyle, the good woman's ſtory made the greateſt impreſſion on the minds of her female auditors; but none felt the force of it more than Emily.—At that inſtant, the idea of Medway darted acroſs her thoughts, and in this recent picture of woe ſhe found a theme for compariſons, not the moſt conducive to her happineſs: but as ſhe was never diſpoſed to encourage diſagreeable reflections, ſhe ſoon baniſhed them from her thoughts, by calling to her aſſiſtance ſubjects more flattering to her vanity: for it is certain, her encouragement to Lord Darnly's

addreſſes was more the reſult of that, than any real affection ſhe poſſeſſed for him.

They all united in comforting the unhappy mother as much as in their power, and then returned to the company, where the pathetic tale was again diſcuſſed; and while the tender-hearted Louiſa moralized on the unhappy effects of ambition, tears chaſed each other in quick ſucceſſion down her cheeks, while thoſe of her ſiſter were ſuffuſed with conſcious bluſhes.

Before their departure from Malvern Mawr, in a little ramble through the grove, Lord Darnly took an opportunity of repeating his tender tale to his beloved Emily; and, in a language too eloquent to be reſiſted, prevailed

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on her to permit him to make propoſals to her father, which were too advantageous to leave a probability of their being rejected.

In moſt modern lovers ſuch preliminaries are the firſt object, and the conſent of the parent precedes that of the daughter; but his Lordſhip was one of thoſe who have too much generoſity to avail themſelves of a father's commands to be favourably received.—He perſuaded himſelf he was beloved; and on the ſtrength of that idea, ventured to propoſe himſelf as the future huſband of one, whoſe perſonal graces, and mental qualifications, he judged a ſufficient equivalent for ſuch an offer, with-

out the appendage of an extenſive fortune.

The ſatisfaction of Emily, after her return from her walk, was too evident to be concealed. Such a propoſal, from the attentions of her lover, had been ſome time anticipated; but the glittering proſpect being now realiſed, pleaſure danced on every feature of her expreſſive face. Title, equipage, and jewels, dazzled her imagination; and the ſound of Lady Darnly vibrated ſo powerfully on her ears, that it was impoſſible for any ſubject, leſs intereſting, to occupy, for a ſingle moment, any of her thoughts.

The enſuing day had been fixed on for his Lordſhip's viſit to Mr. Weſt-

Weſtbrook; and when he handed the lovely trio to their carriage, he hinted his impatience for the morrow in a manner ſo very energetic, that both Louiſa and her friend were led to imagine ſome great event was dependant on its arrival.

They had not, however, long to continue in ſuſpenſe; for Emily, with that frankneſs generally peculiar to her diſpoſition, acquainted them, as ſoon as the carriage drove off, with what had paſſed between herſelf and lover.

When they ſet Miſs Bloomer down at her aunt's, they learnt that the family of Sir William was expected at Glendor the beginning of the following week; and Selina, little ſuſpecting the pain

which this intelligence gave her friend, rejoiced infinitely at the news, as she was become very impatient to see her brother and sister; and more so to embrace their little Emily, whose infantine charms had already been the subject of much panegyric from the partial mother.

"What a charming addition to our parties (cried she) and as I make no doubt but Lady Bloomer is become more domestic since her lying-in, she will enjoy our rural pleasures with a much higher *goût* than when she was last among us. How will they be surprised, my dear Emily, to hear of your approaching union with Lord Darnly! I am sure it is a prospect on which they will be highly felicitated; for I really believe

believe my ſiſter feels for you the warmeſt friendſhip. She has wrote to me but once ſince you left her, and then her letters were filled with encomiums on you.—But ſhe proteſted ſhe would chide you for your ſilence.—So you muſt now prepare your excuſes."

Selina was too much elevated to obſerve the embarraſſment of Emily, though almoſt too viſible to paſs unnoticed; and Mrs. Alworthy joining her in extorting from the ladies a promiſe of paſſing the firſt leiſure day they had at her cottage, the converſation took another turn, which helped to wear it off; and after chatting half an hour, they drove home, but not in very exhilarated ſpirits, for Louiſa found herſelf depreſſed,

without being able to assign a cause; and the heart of Emily underwent the most horrid alarms, for fear that the sight of her should again revive Sir William's lawless passion, and instigate him to attempt some barrier to her marriage: but she flattered herself, as he was not prepared for such a piece of intelligence, he could not then have formed any plan against her; and that as Lord Darnly was acquainted with his criminal attachment, his protection would secure her from future attempts. Her principal care was, how she should conduct herself with coolness to the Baronet, and give no cause of suspicion to his lady. Thus were both sisters occupied with disagreeable reflections, and

instead

inſtead of entertaining their worthy parent with the paſt occurrences of the day, their natural innocent vivacity was clouded by thought, and for ſome time hardly ſuffered them to give rational anſwers to the numerous queſtions alternately put to them, both by him and Mr. Aubrey.

After ſupper, the gloom began in ſome meaſure to diſſipate, and the mournful accident of the afternoon became their ſubject, when the old gentlemen were unanimous in cenſuring the unfortunate ſuicide for her ill-judged pride.

"Is it poſſible (ſaid Mr. Aubrey) that any rational woman can place her happineſs in excelling her neighbours in finery; and, to acquire a precedency among them,

yield her hand, while her heart ſtrongly oppoſes the ſacrifice? Such an one hardly deſerves our pity, whatever be the conſequences of her folly. Had an arbitrary parent, from intereſted motives, forced her to ſuch an union, every feeling heart muſt have ſympathized in her diſtreſs; but as ſhe choſe to barter her felicity for ſuch an inconſiderate ſatisfaction, the poor young fellow, who had the misfortune to place on her his affections, is by far the moſt pitiable object of the two."

"I am of your opinion, my good friend (ſaid Mr. Weſtbrook) but cannot help attributing the conduct of this young woman more to the force of an uncultivated mind, than an error of judgment.

ment. Liberal ideas, though they are ſometimes inherent, are more generally the produce of a liberal education. I confeſs, it is ſeldom that the inſtructions of youth are ſo conducted, as to inſtill in them a proper eſtimation of the goods of this life, for they deſpiſe, as often as they over-rate their value. We have one day, inſtances of young ladies contemning all the advantages of birth and ſplendid fortune, matching themſelves with footmen, and degenerating from their original grandeur to Plebeian meanneſs. Another day we hear of women who ſacrifice themſelves, in all the bloom of youth and beauty, to impotence and old age, even when accompanied with perſonal deformity, for the pleaſure

of out-blazoning their neighbours in dreſs and jewels. Such is the caprice of human nature! But we very ſeldom have an inſtance of the latter, where the heart is prepoſſeſſed in favour of another object. When affection dictates the conduct, though it ſhould unfortunately lead to an imprudent action, we naturally blend pity with our cenſure; but thoſe misfortunes which originate from ſordid inclinations, or ill-grounded ambition, excite only our contempt. However uncommon ſuch a declaration may be in a parent, I could much ſooner pardon a child who ſuffered herſelf to be governed by her tenderneſs, though it led to an imprudent match, than forgive her, if, in oppoſition to her

her own inclinations, ſhe could wed herſelf to ſplendid wretchedneſs, and proſtitute her perſon for that empty gew gaw, wealth; for an intereſted marriage is at beſt but legal proſtitution — it indicates, in my opinion, an indelicacy of ſentiment that totally ſullies the character of a modeſt woman; eſpecially thoſe women whoſe education is ſuppoſed to have furniſhed them with more reaſonable ideas of happineſs. But we cannot certainly expect to find pearls among rubbiſh; therefore the moſt favourable conſtruction we can put on the conduct of the unfortunate woman, whoſe melancholy exit gave birth to theſe reflections, is, that want of education left her unfurniſhed with arguments to combat

combat her pride, and ſhe yielded to its fatal impulſe from the narrowneſs of her underſtanding. From hence we may learn this ſhort but uſeful leſſon,—that pride and ambition are the parents of evil, and happineſs the offspring of humility and a contented mind.

The ſenſations of the young ladies, during theſe obſervations, were not the moſt tranquil. Miſs Weſtbrook ſincerely ſubſcribed to the ſentiments of her father; and though ſhe did not ſo openly avow her ſentiments, thought no nuptials could be auſpicious where intereſt, more than affection, ſwayed either of the parties. As to Emily, ſhe felt herſelf ſo greatly embarraſſed, from an idea that her father was certainly acquainted with

with the real ſtate of her mind, that ſhe knew not hardly how to conduct herſelf under the conſciouſneſs of her folly; and, under pretence of a violent head-ach, prevailed on her ſiſter to retire earlier than uſual.

About eleven the next morning, Lord Darnly waited on the old gentleman; and, both the ladies being abſent, without any ceremony, introduced the ſubject of his early viſit, which he owned, with much frankneſs, had kept him waking all the night, and apologized for not ſooner ſoliciting his ſanction in an affair of ſuch importance, from the ſole motive of wiſhing to be firſt convinced that ſuch an application would be agreeable to his daughter: for though obedi-

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ence was an eſſential duty in a child, he ſhould never have wiſhed to obtain the happineſs of her hand from that alone. — "Your known character for goodneſs and indulgence to your children, Sir, (continued his Lordſhip) perſuaded me, you would not reject my propoſals from the ſingle reaſon of not having made them before I had room to flatter myſelf that Miſs Weſtbrook's inclinations concurred with my wiſhes; a plea which I hope you will accept as an excuſe for this neglect. My fortune and rank in life left me little cauſe to fear a rejection on point of pecuniary matters; but as I wiſhed thoſe to be my leaſt recommendation, I thought it time enough to mention advantages of that

that kind, when I had obtained her affections."

Mr. Weſtbrook aſſured his Lordſhip, that he was highly ſenſible of the honour intended his daughter, and ſhould accept his propoſals with pleaſure, if ſhe approved them; for the happineſs of his children was ever the firſt wiſh of his heart, and muſt have been equally ſo, had his propoſals been leſs advantageous.

The young ladies, ſoon after, made their appearance, and Mr. Weſtbrook, tenderly taking the hand of Emily, acquainted her with what had paſſed: jocoſely adding, that he had withheld his acceptance of Lord Darnly's ſplendid offers, till aſſured they were made with her conſent, as it required

quired much reſolution to encourage the addreſſes of a lover, young, amiable, rich, and titled; the two latter of which he hoped ſhe looked upon as the leaſt of his Lordſhip's recommendations.

A glow of modeſty vermilioned her lovely face while ſhe gently articulated acquieſcence with her lover's wiſhes; but a ſigh iſſued from her boſom: probably a ſigh of regret, that ſhe could not look upon wealth and title with that indifference her father did.

Before his Lordſhip's departure, every thing was concluded on but the day of marriage, and that was to be deferred only till the lawyers had adjuſted the ſettlements; during which period all other neceſſary preparations were to be forwarded

forwarded with the greateſt expedition.

As by the time this important buſineſs was diſcuſſed, it was too late to return home to dinner, his Lordſhip paſſed the remainder of the day at the farm, and the afternoon was ſpent in rambling thro' the verdant paſtures which led to the habitation of Mr. Aubrey, on whom they propoſed laying the agreeable tribute of treating them with a diſh of tea.

As they walked happily along, planning ſchemes of future happineſs, a wiſh aroſe in the mind of his Lordſhip, which promiſed a great encreaſe of felicity to the friends moſt valuable to him, ſhould it ever be accompliſhed.

" I have been thinking, my dear

dear Emily (ſaid he) that there is a friend of ours who has a very valuable heart in ſtore for your amiable ſiſter.—What ſay you, my dear Louiſa, to a lover of my choice; juſt ſuch another ſincere unfaſhionable mortal as myſelf?"

"There would need no higher recommendation, my Lord (replyed the ſweet girl, ſhedding a bluſh of the deepeſt dye) were I inclined to think of any; but while my father lives, I ſhall never harbour a thought of dividing my duty: he claims all my attention, and leaves no room in my heart for other objects."

"Your filial attentions to your parent, my dear girl, is very laudable; but ſtill it need not exclude you from the happineſs of

bleſſing

bleſſing ſome worthy man. When you have ſeen my friend, I am perſuaded you will find that ſome ſmall ſpace of your heart has been left for him to fill.—What are *your* ſentiments, Emily? Do you not think Medway has a ſufficient ſhare of merit and perſonal qualifications to give him a tolerable chance of becoming a ſucceſsful candidate for your ſiſter's affections?"

A queſtion ſo unexpected was productive of much more embarraſſment to Emily than Louiſa.

"Indeed, my Lord, he poſſeſſes both to an eminent degree (ſtammered ſhe hardly intelligibly) I know no one more worthy her affections;— but merit affects not all hearts alike."

"True, but a tender amiable heart

heart is naturally ſuſceptible of eſteem for worthy objects; and when that worth happens to be united with an engaging perſon, it is next to impoſſible that a warmer paſſion ſhould not blend itſelf with friendſhip. I ſhall venture to recommend him as truly deſerving of the latter, and am perſuaded the former of courſe muſt follow. He has an eaſy fortune, ſtill greater expectations; and though no titled lover, it would be a moſt eligible union. In a word, my heart is ſet upon the plan. I will write him a letter of invitation this very evening, and if they do not both fall into the ſnare I lay for them, ſet me down in future as a bungling projector. Nothing can prevent it, but ſome prior engage-

ment

ment on the part of our bluſhing ſiſter here. As to Medway, I will engage that his heart will evaporate at his lips the firſt introductory compliment he pays her, and the coolneſs of a certain Lady be totally obliterated, on finding ſhe has ſo amiable a ſiſter: for you muſt know, Louiſa, he was once half a lover of Emily's; but the unlucky fellow, with all his merit, did not happen to make any impreſſion on her heart; and he was too generous to perſecute her with his addreſſes, when he found them diſagreeable."

The lively, yet earneſt manner in which his Lordſhip treated this new-ſtarted ſubject, would have diverted Emily greatly, had ſhe been

been leſs intereſted in it: but though ſhe had yielded up all thoughts of Medway in conſenting to become Lady Darnly, ſhe could not, without the moſt painful emotions, think of his transferring that affection ſhe was convinced he had once felt for her, though he even transferred it to her ſiſter.

Her confuſion, which left her not the power of ſpeech, muſt have become evident, had it not been for Louiſa's continuing the converſation by earneſtly entreating his Lordſhip not to think of ſuch a thing.

" Indeed, my Lord (added ſhe) I ſhould never be able to come into the preſence of your friend, if I thought you had ever made me the

the ſubject of your correſpondence with him. Pray, Emily, join with me in begging his Lordſhip not to mention me to Mr. Medway."

"Do not alarm yourſelf, my dear, (replied Emily, endeavouring to appear as unembarraſſed as poſſible) I dare ſay if you are ſo averſe to it, his Lordſhip will by no means perſiſt in ſuch a determination. Chance is ever the beſt match-maker, and that may introduce you to ſome one, whom you will be forced to acknowledge has merit enough to find a place in your affections, though perhaps none more deſerving of them than the object now propoſed."

Do not flatter yourſelves (replied his Lordſhip) that I am ſo ea-

ſily perſuaded to relinquiſh a favourite ſcheme. No, no, my good girls, Medway ſhall preſent himſelf before you, in his own proper perſon, before this day week. But be not under any apprehenſions, my ſweet Louiſa, that I ſhall mention you to him in that ſtyle of encomium that will cauſe you any embarraſſment when you ſee him: I ſhall only in general terms invite him to become a ſharer of our rural pleaſures, and leave the reſt to that little blind deity who delights in miſchief too much, to ſuffer two ſuch hearts to retain their tranquillity, after a firſt interview."

They ſmiled at his Lordſhip's pleaſantry, for they had never before ſeen him in ſo gay a humour. The idea of his approaching happineſs

pineſs had diffuſed an air of ſatisfaction over his features; and, in the eyes of Louiſa, rendered him an object too attractive for there to be a poſſibility of his recommending any other to her attention with any hopes of ſucceſs: but the ſmiles of Emily danced merely on the ſurface of her features, for her ſenſations were almoſt too painful for concealment.

Nothing could have happened more *mal-ápropos* than this whim of bringing Medway among them. Emily had never, till then, been ſenſible of the intereſt he held in her affections; and ſhe could almoſt have deſpiſed herſelf, for having ſo long oppoſed thoſe favourable prepoſſeſſions, becauſe he poſſeſſed not thoſe advantages of

which every one, but herſelf, deemed ſo light, when put in the ſcale with merit and perſonal endowments. But ſhe had gone too far to recede, and it was in vain to reflect on a ſubject ſo deſtructive to her preſent happineſs. It became, however, the firſt wiſh of her heart, that ſomething might prevent the arrival of Medway at Malvern Mawr till after her marriage; when, ſhe flattered herſelf, ſhe ſhould have made up her mind ſufficiently, to behold him with no other emotions than what was conſiſtent with the dignity of Lord Darnly's wife.

The good old Aubrey received his youthful viſiters with his wonted cordiality; and, after leading them through every part of his little

little Eden, to give them a view of his improvements, regaled them with a diſh of tea in his favourite grotto, which he had embelliſhed in the higheſt ſtyle of rural elegance, and furniſhed with ſeveral kinds of muſical inſtruments; that, when favoured with the ſociety of his agreeable neighbours, the powers of harmony might be united with thoſe of friendſhip, to render the entertainment more delightful. After tea, obſerving Emily to be more ſerious than uſual, he entreated her to baniſh a gravity, which ill became her lively diſpoſition, he ſaid, and favour him with a ſong, while her ſiſter accompanied her on the piano forte.

It was with reluctance ſhe complied; but never accuſtomed to

refuſe a requeſt of her worthy friend, ſhe prepared to oblige him; and, ſoftened by her recent emotions, ſung an air of Handel's in a ſtyle ſo unuſually ſoft and plaintive, that it diffuſed an air of languiſhment over all her features, and rendered her (in the eyes of her lover) more irreſiſtibly attractive than he had ever beheld her, and prompted him to return many thanks to Mr. Aubrey for the entertainment he had procured him. Louiſa was entreated to ſing alſo: ſhe begged to be excuſed, but her apologies were not accepted; and ſhe was conſtrained, much againſt her inclination, to follow the example of her ſiſter.

The gentle harmony of her melodious voice called forth the warmeſt

warmeſt plaudits from her noble auditor, and animated her to proceed; but the recollection that thoſe praiſes fell from the lover of her ſiſter, whoſe good opinion it was almoſt criminal in her to aſpire to, at once threw a damp upon her ſpirits; and when ſhe had finiſhed her ſong, ſhe threw down her lovely eyes, as if conſcious of having done wrong, in wiſhing to excite pleaſure.

After paſſing an hour or two in this ſweet receſs, Mr. Aubrey accompanied them back to the farm; and taking upon himſelf the charge of Louiſa, left his Lordſhip more at liberty to entertain his deſtined bride.

The winged moments of time fly more rapidly with lovers than

other people: they were back before Lord Darnly even knew that they were out of Aubrey's garden; while, on the contrary, Louisa, who had exchanged the arm of his Lordship for that of her venerable friend, thought the walk at least double its usual length.

Soon after they had reached home, his Lordship took his leave; but recommended it to the ladies to lose no time in forwarding the bridal preparations; adding, he should bring Lady Palmerson, the ensuing day, to hold a consultation with them on the important business.

After his Lordship's departure, Mr. Westbrook communicated the pleasing news of his daughter's approaching marriage to Mr. Aubrey,

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and added to it a wiſh, that he might live to ſee Louiſa as happily diſpoſed of. "But, however, ſhould ſhe not have ſo ſplendid an offer," continued this worthy parent, "the fortune I ſhall be able to give her, will be more than ſufficient to her wants, for Lord Darnly has nobly refuſed any dowry with her ſiſter: and her mind, far leſs aſpiring than Emily's, muſt, whenever ſhe makes her election of a huſband, be impreſſed by worth, though it ſhould not happen to be accompanied by wealth or title. I am convinced ſhe is too diſcrete ever to make an improper one; and ſhall therefore always have an eye to her happineſs more than her elevation."

Mr. Aubrey congratulated his neighbour on the approaching event, and approved of his paren-

tal determination in regard to Louiſa; adding, that ſhe was worthy of all his tenderneſs, and ſhould heaven think fit to call him firſt to its bliſsful manſions, ſhe ſhould ever find in him what ſhe muſt loſe in ſo good a father; but hoped ſuch a proof of the ſincerity of his friendſhip would not be wanting, as it was probable they might both live to ſee her under the protection of ſome worthy man, and that both ſiſters would be a bleſſing to their declining years, by doing honour to whatever rank in life it was the will of Providence to place them. "I could have wiſhed," continued this worthy man, "that their diſpoſitions had been more equally arranged, for Emily appears to have

have hardly ſufficient tenderneſs in her's, while Louiſa has more than a juſt proportion: and ſhould it be her misfortune to place her affections where there is not a reciprocal return, her ſenſibility will be injurious to her health, and totally undermine her happineſs. The effects of too much tenderneſs is certainly moſt to be dreaded, as a deficiency of the kind is generally made up, when the tender ties of wife and mother awaken ſenſibility, and deſtroy a reliſh for leſs ſatisfactory pleaſures. At preſent, the heart of Emily receives its greateſt impreſſions from gaiety and ſplendor; but love for ſo amiable a huſband as Lord Darnly will, I hope, refine its ſentiments, and convince her, that the leaſt

part of her happineſs is derived from thoſe ſuperficial advantages ſhe will gain by ſo deſirable an union."

"I hope ſo too," replied Mr. Weſtbrook, "and muſt acknowledge, that I could wiſh ſhe had her ſiſter's tenderneſs. Without the addition of a title, his Lordſhip is juſt the character calculated to affect the heart of Louiſa. I even have ſometimes feared ſhe has been too ſenſible of his worth: for I have obſerved her hang with pleaſure on every word he uttered, while her tender gaze has been followed with a bluſh of ſeeming ſelf-reproach for the involuntary error.—Had he addreſſed her, I am perſuaded he would have found an eaſy paſſage to her heart; but

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as his choice happened to fall on Emily, I hope they will both be happy. The latter cannot well fail of felicity, and the former will, I truſt, in ſome future day, meet with another deſerving object equally formed to merit her attachment."

Here their converſation was interrupted by the entrance of a viſiter; but the latter part of Mr. Weſtbrook's ſpeech dwelt powerfully on the mind of Aubrey. He had himſelf obſerved an unuſual melancholy on the features of Louiſa, ſince the arrival of Lord Darnly; and, greatly as he found himſelf intereſted in the happineſs of every part of this amiable family, it was a ſubject of much concern to him.

Not

Not a day elapſed without the preſence of his Lordſhip, and he was generally accompanied by his ſiſter: for as her Ladyſhip's opinion in the choice of perſonal decoration, was held deciſive, nothing was fixed on by Emily without her approbation.—Patterns of every kind were procured from the metropolis, and all her workwomen employed in forwarding the bridal ornaments with the greateſt expedition. During all this preparation, Aubrey was not unbuſied. He had by him an elegant ſet of jewels, that had been deſigned for the nuptials of his deceaſed Maria, and thoſe he ſent to London with orders to have them ſet in the moſt modern ſtyle, intending them as a preſent

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to the daughter of his friend: and not unmindful of her lovely ſiſter, had, at the ſame time, ordered for her ſeveral little ornamental trinkets, as a proof that his attention to them was equal, though the preſent occaſion rendered a greater ſhare of compliments due to Emily.

The day they had fixed on for their viſit to Mrs. Alworthy, Lady Palmerſon came earlier than uſual, with the view of accompanying them; and though ſomething had prevented the gentlemen from being of the party, they promiſed to be at the cottage time enough to eſcort them home.

The afternoon was paſſed with much chearfulneſs on every ſide. Mrs. Alworthy, though ſhe had never

never been married, poſſeſſed none of that peeviſhneſs generally attributed to old maids. On the contrary, ſhe ever appeared happy herſelf, and endeavoured to communicate her happineſs to every one about her. Diſcretion, not neceſſity, had deſtined her to a life of celibacy. She loſt an amiable lover in the bloom of youth; and as ſhe could ſelect no one from among her ſubſequent train of admirers worthy to ſucceed him, ſhe had too much prudence to reſign her liberty for the ſingle ſatisfaction of being a wife. Her principal felicity for many years had been the education of her niece, and her attentions had been amply repaid, by the affectionate regard, and implicit obedience which Selina

lina ever obſerved towards her. If this good old Lady had any peculiarities, it was in her attachment to ancient manners, and a particular veneration for every ſpecies of antique needlework. She had one room furniſhed entirely by the induſtry of herſelf and niece, and her vanity could not receive a higher gratification than in the commendation of its beauties.

Lady Palmerſon was naturally a great admirer of antiquities, and found much ſatisfaction in looking over her collection of curioſities, which conſiſted chiefly in hiſtorical pieces of embroidery. Every chair, ſopha, or ſtool, exhibited ſome ſtriking picture of virtuous heroiſm, or deſcriptive emblem of the rolling ſeaſons; and

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on the carpet were ſtrewed flowers and fruits which ſeemed to invite the touch and provoke the appetite, while the fear of deſtroying their glowing beauties, almoſt forbade the admiring gazers from approaching to take a nearer view, leſt their feet ſhould deal deſtruction round them.

While buſied in admiring theſe various productions of induſtry and art, her Ladyſhip recollected a little print ſhe had brought down with her that would afford a pretty ſubject for a ſcreen. "I think, my dear Emily," ſaid ſhe, "you have a ſketch of it in your pocket book—at leaſt I ſaw you attempting one the other day while I was at my toilet."

"I believe I have," replied ſhe—

ſhe—taking out her book. In ſearching for the drawing, down dropt a bit of paper. On her picking it up, ſhe found it to be the lines which had accompanied the gift of Merlin. Bluſhes inſtantly tinged her cheeks, on recollection of the folly which had been the ſource of that myſterious affair: and the wiſh of learning who was the kind friend to whom ſhe was indebted, again became ſo predominant, that for a moment ſhe forgot what ſhe was looking for, and ſtood fixed in the attitude of ſilent contemplation, with the paper in her hand, when Lord Palmerſon and her lover entered the room.

The latter, after paying his compliments to Mrs. Alworthy and her

her niece, advanced with a letter in his hand, and presenting it to Emily, said to her with a smile of satisfaction, "See, my dear Emily, how lucky things sometimes happen! My wishes are even prevented. I have just received this from Medway, acquainting me that he is coming to pass the remainder of the summer at Bloomer Hall, and will accompany the family down; "merely," said he, in a kind of whisper, "to have an eye upon the conduct of Sir William, for fear of a relapse; though, he says, he is inclined to believe, the poor devil is truly penitent for his past errors, and would not have come into the country at all, but on the persuasion of her Ladyship (who is quite impatient to make one of our so-

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cial party) for he is frightened to death at the thoughts of encountering your reſentments."

"He may throw aſide his fears," replied Emily, in the ſame key; "I forgive the paſt, and with ſo powerful a protector as your Lordſhip, ſhall be under no apprehenſions for the future."

She then turned her attention to the letter, and the firſt glance convinced her the characters were the ſame as thoſe of the paper ſhe had in her hand.

Generous man! whiſpered her heart, but the words died unuttered on her lips; and ſhe pretended to be engaged in peruſing its contents, while in fact ſhe was ſo entirely diſcompoſed by this diſcovery,

very, that ſhe knew not a ſentence it contained.

It proved to her, that diſintereſted as had ever been the conduct of Medway, ſhe was certainly ſtill very valuable to his heart; and the idea of the uneaſineſs he muſt naturally feel at ſeeing her united to another, inflicted on her boſom the ſevereſt pain. She would willingly have attributed its ſenſations to pity only; but love had in them more than an equal ſhare: and would honour have permitted her to obey its dictates, it would probably have proved itſelf a powerful combatant againſt ambition.

The agitation of her mind was not unnoticed by Lord Darnly, but he could not deviſe its ſource. She had declined the addreſſes of his

his friend, and therefore he could not poſſibly ſuppoſe ſhe loved him. Medway had never acquainted him of the little ſtratagem he had made uſe of to free her from her obligation to Sir William, or he might have imagined it proceeded from her emotions of gratitude, on diſcovering to whom ſhe was indebted: but as it was, he could form no reaſonable conjecture of the ſudden diſcompoſure which was viſible on her expreſſive countenance; and fearing ſhe was ill, diſcovered the moſt tender inquietude, and offering his arm, entreated ſhe would permit him to lead her into the air.

His tenderneſs only redoubled her uneaſineſs; for never did ſhe appear ſo deſpicable to herſelf as

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at that moment. She had refuſed the addreſſes of a man who ſincerely loved her, and who was equally beloved by her, (though her pride reſiſted the emotions of her heart) refuſed them becauſe he poſſeſſed not honours equal to her ambition; and though the nobleman to whom ſhe had promiſed her hand was amiable to exceſs, felt for him none of that tenderneſs which was requiſite to render their union a happy one. What greater ſubject of ſelf-reproach could ſhe poſſibly have had? She had fallen into the ſame error as the unfortunate woman whoſe life had recently fallen a ſacrifice to her folly; fallen into it even without her excuſes, for no one poſſeſſed a more enlightened

ened underſtanding. To have reſiſted a paſſion for an undeſerving object, would have been an effort worthy of admiration; but to oppoſe an inclination for a man whom all her family muſt have approved, had they known of the attachment, was a ſpecies of folly not hardly to be equalled; and muſt, ſhe thought, if known, rob her of the good opinion of all her friends, and even of the eſteem of both Medway and Lord Darnly.

In a word, her mind was a perfect chaos. But notwithſtanding the conflicts it ſuſtained, ſhe had not the reſolution to unboſom herſelf to any one; and determined, at all events, to fulfil her engagements; for though ſhe would now have willingly given up the glittering

proſpect which awaited her, ſhe could not ſupport the idea of giving ſuch a ſhock to the boſom of her lover, as he muſt naturally feel, if he knew that her attachment to him had been founded merely on the baſis of ambition.

Nothing could remove the preſent inquietude of her mind: but a few turns in the garden, helped to diſſipate the external appearances of it; and, on her return to the company, ſhe endeavoured to aſſume all the compoſure in her power, that no one might form any conjectures that her mind was diveſted of its uſual tranquillity.

For ſome days ſhe ſupported theſe jarring commotions of her boſom with ſuch addreſs, that no one would have ſuppoſed but ſhe had

had been perfectly happy; but the ſight of the object who had given birth to them, overturned all her reſolutions.

The very day on which the family arrived at the hall, Medway made his appearance at the farm, and in terms expreſſive of the intereſt he had ever taken in Emily's happineſs, congratulated her on her approaching union with his friend. But while he aſſured her, in the tendereſt ſtyle of fraternal affection, that ſhe could not poſſibly have made a more worthy choice, a ſigh of regret involuntarily eſcaped him, and ſpoke in a language more expreſſive than words, that he could ſincerely have wiſhed ſo deſirable an election had fallen on himſelf.

Louisa was present during these congratulations, and her discernment at once pointed out to her (though her sister had never been ingenuous enough to own it) that Medway must have been the man alluded to, when she once said that the object who had made the greatest impression on her heart, wanted the titled advantages of Lord Darnly to render his addresses welcome.

At that moment, all her sisterly affection could not withhold her from looking on Emily in the most unamiable light: and while she beheld Medway with an eye of pity, her gentle soul whispered her that no species of cruelty could exceed that of destroying the felicity of two such worthy men. For to marry Lord Darnly without

out feeling for him a proper degree of affection, ſhe deemed equally culpable, as to decline the addreſſes of his friend, from motives of ambition only, while her heart pleaded ſo powerfully in his favour.

Her natural repugnance to give pain, added to a fear of diſcovering that partiality for his Lordſhip which ſhe already doubted was too viſible, could alone have reſtrained the gentle Louiſa from endeavouring to convince her ſiſter how erroneous was her conduct. But there needed not her admonitions to fill the meaſure of Emily's unhappineſs: ſhe ſtood ſufficiently ſelf-condemned; and the ſight of Medway, while her boſom was yet in the height of its perturbations,

from her recent discovery of his generous conduct, so greatly agitated her spirits, that she was ready to sink under the weight of her confusion, while he paid her his congratulatory compliments; and she could hardly compose herself sufficiently to enquire after the health of Lady Bloomer and her little name-sake.

Her embarrassment was not unnoticed by him; but naturally attributing it to her delicacy on this occasion, he forbore to say any thing more on the subject of her marriage; and to dissipate her confusion, introduced more general topics, in which Louisa bore her part, and by the affability and sweetness of her manner, did justice to the encomiums which Sir William

William and his Lady had frequently beſtowed on her, though the vivacity of her ſiſter had recommended her moſt to their attention.

When Medway took his leave, Mr. Weſtbrook gave him a general invitation in the moſt friendly terms, — for merit had ever a free acceſs to his family: and had not his appearance been perfectly prepoſſeſſing, the amiable character drawn of him by Lord Darnly would have been ſufficient to have procured him the moſt welcome reception:—but there are ſome faces that carry in them letters of recommendation. Medway needed no other; for from the firſt ſight of him, this tender parent felt himſelf inſpired with a wiſh that

his Louiſa might behold him with a degree of partiality equal to that he felt himſelf.

As this amiable young man, though he could not entirely ſubdue his paſſion for Emily, had brought himſelf to the reaſonable determination of endeavouring to think of her only as the wife of his friend, he attempted not to ſhun her ſociety; but by accuſtoming himſelf to ſee her frequently, hoped in a ſhort time to behold her without any of thoſe emotions which agitated him on the firſt interview; and either in company with Lord Darnly, or the Bloomer family, was daily at the farm. For though Sir William could not behold her with eyes of indifference, yet he had

abjured

abjured all thoughts of any farther attempts upon her honour, and ſhewed ſuch contrition for his paſt folly, that ſhe renewed her intimacy with his Lady without any apprehenſions of future plots againſt her.

Lady Bloomer rejoiced in Emily's approaching happineſs, but was aſtoniſhed to ſee that her natural vivacity had given place to a languor which almoſt bordered upon melancholy. Every one but Louiſa, among her female acquaintance, rallied her upon it; and would ſometimes tell her gayly, that ſuch ſerioufneſs would become her ſiſter on a ſimilar occaſion, but was merely farcical in her; for they knew not how to believe her ſpirits could ſuffer any diminution from the thoughts of ma-

trimony; especially, an union so calculated to promote her felicity. Aubrey and her father only rejoiced to see her gravity, as it flattered them with a belief, that the splendor which awaited her, did not totally render her insensible to those reflections which ought to occupy the mind of every female on the eve of marriage, though a marriage in which every thing conspired to ensure happiness; for they deemed it as essential a duty to aim at calmness and serenity, under a sudden flow of prosperity, as to acquire resignation under adversity. Little did they suspect that Emily's mind was the prey of contending passions; and that while she appeared the most enviable, she was,

in

in fact, the moſt unhappy of women.

Every thing was in forwardneſs for her union, the ſettlements almoſt finiſhed, an elegant villa engaged a few miles diſtant from Lord Palmerſon's; carriages and liveries beſpoke in the higheſt ſtyle of magnificence; jewels, plate, cloaths, and all the *et cetera* of pomp and vanity, were ſhewn in gay profuſion before her eyes; and though on the point of poſſeſſing all thoſe glittering toys, thoſe empty honours on which her wiſhes had ſo long been placed, ſhe ſickened at the ſight; and while trying on her bridal dreſs, could hardly refrain from exclaiming in the emphatical words of Solomon,—All indeed is vanity! For the idea of purchaſing

chaſing outward embelliſhments at the expence of mental happineſs, was too dear a purchaſe, and deprived them of all their expected ſatisfactions.

Though ſhe ought to have rejoiced in obſerving that Medway had obtained ſuch maſtery over his inclinations as to behold her with compoſure, and, in compliance to the wiſhes of his friend, was endeavouring to turn his attentions to her ſiſter; yet the thoughts of his ſucceeding in that endeavour, and the equally probable ſuggeſtion that he would in time become agreeable to Louiſa, ſerved only to aggravate her ſorrow, and embitter her repoſe. Soon after the day had been fixed upon for her nuptials, the agitation of her

her boſom became too powerful for her conſtitution; and while Lord Darnly was rapturouſly anticipating his promiſed happineſs, her health yielded to her conflicting paſſion, and a violent fever enſuing, threw a damp on all his Lordſhip's happy proſpects, and involved the friends of both in the utmoſt diſtreſs of mind.

With the tendereſt affection did Louiſa watch over her, and lament the fatal ſource of this alarming illneſs; for to her, who never left her ſiſter's chamber, it was too ſoon apparent. In the paroxyſms of her delirium, ſhe would call inceſſantly on the name of Medway, and then looking wildly round her, aſk, in accents of affright, if Lord Darnly heard her?

"I am

"I am married now, you know, and muſt not love him.—Do not tell my huſband—I will try to forget him; indeed I will.—But he is ſo good, ſo generous—who could help it? Huſh! Louiſa hears us—ſhe will love him too—and then poor Emily muſt die.—Not a word more, ſhe is juſt here.—Ha! Medway too! how amiable he looks! What a pity he is not a Lord!"

Thus would ſhe run on, while her lovely ſiſter, anxious to ſooth her diſturbed imagination, embraced every interval of reaſon to convince her ſhe was yet unmarried, and might ſtill be Medway's, while her tender heart bled at the diſtreſs which this unexpected diſcovery muſt neceſſarily inflict on the unhappy Darnly.

To

To her father only did she discover the state of Emily's mind: and to prevent it from being suspected by any one else, kept all other friends from her sight, under pretence that it was the express command of her physicians that she should be kept quiet till her delirium had subsided. But all precautions were in vain: her lover would not submit to such restraint. It was useless for Louisa to argue on the necessity of such self-denial: he would admit of no excuse. To gaze on her loved countenance, without suffering himself to be seen by her, was all that he requested; and it was not in humanity to deny him.

At a time when Emily had just awoke from a gentle slumber, her amiable

amiable nurſe thought it the beſt time to comply with his Lordſhip's requeſt; telling him, if he would gently approach the foot of her bed, ſhe would ſoftly draw aſide the curtains that he might have an opportunity of ſeeing her unobſerved; and promiſed, that if her ſpirits were calm enough to bear an interview, ſhe would by degrees prepare her for a ſight of him.

But what heart-rending pangs ſhot through his whole frame, to hear her, after a few reaſonable monoſyllables in anſwer to her ſiſter's tender enquiries after her health, burſt into the moſt incoherent ramblings, and frequently pronounce the name of Medway with the utmoſt pathos of expreſ-

expreſſion,—then ſuddenly ſeeming to recollect herſelf, aſk of Heaven forgiveneſs for thinking of him, when ſhe had vowed eternal affection to Lord Darnly!

"Huſh, my love," ſaid Louiſa, trembling for his Lordſhip's peace, "you have committed no offence againſt Heaven,—try and compoſe yourſelf."

"No offence! ſay you?—Yes, I have offended againſt ſincerity. Am I not married to an amiable man, who loves me with the greateſt tenderneſs, while my capricious heart, impreſſed with the image of another, refuſes to do juſtice to his merit?—And Louiſa will ſoon be married too;—ſhe will not refuſe poor Medway, becauſe he wants a title.—Go, ſend her to me—

me—let me warn her againſt ſuch fatal ambition.—Fly—I cannot reſt till I have ſeen her!—ſhe ſhuns me now.—How deſpicable has my folly made me, ſince even the tender-hearted Louiſa cannot bear my preſence!"

His Lordſhip could ſtay to hear no more; but gliding ſoftly out of her room, ſtole into an adjoining chamber to indulge the flow of grief which aroſe in his boſom at her expreſſing herſelf in a language ſo unexpected, ſo entirely deſtructive to his deareſt hopes.

"Is it poſſible!" cried he, throwing himſelf on a chair, "that I have been all this time the dupe of my own vanity?—Yes, it muſt be ſo: truths frequently tranſpire amid the ramblings of delirium, that

that the reaſonable mind would fear to utter. The dear ſuffering angel has not only deceived me, but deceived herſelf. She was ignorant of the true ſtate of her affections till the arrival of Medway: and the dread of beholding him the huſband of her ſiſter, has awakened all thoſe tender emotions, which his want of title induced her before ſo aſſiduouſly to ſtifle.—Unfortunate Darnly not to have ſeen her ſooner, or to have ſeen her with indifference! But in ſpite of this diſcovery, dear muſt ſhe ever be to my heart, and I will convince her of it at the expence of my own repoſe. Medway is deſerving of her, he alone can make her happy: and ſhould it ever again pleaſe Heaven to reſtore

ſtore her to her ſenſes, I will embrace the firſt hour of her returning reaſon, to make a ſacrifice worthy only of one whoſe love is pure as mine. That done, adieu to England, until time has mellowed the affliction, or ended me."

Juſt as he had finiſhed this plaintive, generous ſoliloquy, Louiſa entered the apartment. "That done, adieu to England," were the only words which caught her ear, and thoſe ſtruck terror to her heart. She had obſerved his agitation, as he ſlipped out of her ſiſter's chamber, and ſympathizing in his diſtreſs, pity, blended with a ſofter paſſion, induced her to follow him in hopes of affording ſome conſolation to his afflicted mind. It would be difficult to

ſay, with certainty, which affected her moſt; the dangerous ſtate of Emily, or the abyſs of grief, into which her illneſs, added to this painful diſcovery, muſt neceſſarily plunge her amiable lover. But both operated ſo powerfully on her ſenſibility, that ſhe almoſt ſtood in equal need of conſolation herſelf, as he to whom ſhe went to offer it. For ſome moments both preſerved a mournful ſilence, which at length was broke by Darnly, who, in tender terms, lamented the cruelty of his fate; and imagining that the diſtreſs of Louiſa aroſe from the danger in which ſhe beheld her ſiſter, endeavoured to ſooth her grief, with the moſt generous aſſurances of relinquiſhing his deareſt hopes,

and

and promoting her happineſs with his friend.

"Yes," continued he, "ſhe ſhall be his; for though I love her even to madneſs, I would not deſire her to fulfil her engagements to me after this diſcovery of her prior attachment, for all the felicity I ſhould experience in the poſſeſſion of my heart's firſt wiſh. But though equal to the taſk of reſigning her to the arms of my happy rival, I am not equal to that of being preſent at the ſacrifice. I muſt therefore quit a ſpot that will only ſerve to remind me of my unhappineſs, till able to be a witneſs of their felicity, without any of thoſe envious emotions which would diminiſh the generoſity of the act.—

Why

Why do you weep, dear Louiſa? (obſerving the tears ſtealing down her cheeks) ſurely I am not ſo unfortunate, as to be deſtroying the happineſs of one ſiſter, while to promote that of the other I freely reſign my own! —Ah! it muſt be ſo.—You already begin to feel a dawn of affection for the lover I recommended, and this diſcovery of Emily's favourable prepoſſeſſions for him, is deſtructive both to your felicity and mine."

"Indeed, my Lord, you are miſtaken," ſaid the lovely girl, wiping away the pearly drops; "Medway is, I acknowledge, amiable enough to juſtify ſuch an idea; but his merit has made no other impreſſion on me than thoſe

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ſentiments of pity and eſteem I ſhould naturally feel for any other man ſo circumſtanced as he appears to me. From the firſt interview, I diſcovered his attachment to my ſiſter, and admired the reſolution with which he endeavoured to combat his paſſion, and ſeem rejoiced at an event which was a mortal wound to his happineſs. It was alſo not difficult to diſcern, that her refuſal of him had been the work of ſelf-denial, and that her endeavours to behold him with indifference were productive of the moſt painful emotions, which, amidſt all her happy proſpects with you, empoiſoned her felicity. I was happy to ſee the ſerenity which Medway appeared to have acquired in her

her preſence, after the firſt two or three viſits, and flattered myſelf it would reſtore her's alſo. For as ſhe had from choice, accepted your generous propoſal, it was inconſiſtent to ſuppoſe ſhe ſhould be affected at the victory he appeared to have obtained over his paſſion; but ſo it proved, and the conſequences of this unfortunate inſtability of her diſpoſition (a diſpoſition which, had it been leſs tinctured with ambition, is amiable to exceſs) will, I fear, be fatal to herſelf, and involve the friends moſt intereſted in her happineſs in perpetual miſery. I would willingly have ſaved your Lordſhip the diſtreſs I knew you muſt experience from this diſcovery; but your impati-

ence to see the dear ill-fated girl, while her mind was in this unsettled state, has destroyed all my hopes of preserving your tranquillity, by confining the secret within the limits of my own bosom. Could it have been concealed, I had reason to hope you might at least have been happy; for the natural goodness of her heart, and your amiable disposition, would, I am sure, had an union taken place between you, have induced her, in a short time, to have conquered every emotion, but that of esteem for Medway, and to have transferred all her affections where she had given her hand; but it is now too late, and I have the misery to see you wretched, and to hear you talk of

flying

flying for ever from your friends. Should ſuch a fatal determination take place, what will become of Lady Palmerſon? How will it be borne by the noble-minded Medway? For ſhould Emily recover to bleſs him with her hand, muſt it not be a wound to his generous heart to reflect, that the friend who reſigned to him his happineſs, is an exile from his native country, a prey to grief, and fled from every ſocial joy in life? Would to Heaven I had withheld you from a ſight of her, till after the criſis of her diſorder!"

Any but a mind ſo entirely immerſed in grief as was that of Lord Darnly, muſt have perceived, that the tender intereſt Louiſa took in his felicity, proceed-

ed from a warmer ſentiment than that of friendſhip; but ſuch an idea never entered his head. He admired that charming ſenſibility which rendered her ſo ſuſceptible of others woes, and thanked her for her kind attention to his peace; but prudence, he added, pointed out to him the abſolute neceſſity of his leaving the country as ſoon as the phyſicians had pronounced their patient out of danger.

For ſome ſucceſſive days her diſorder ſeemed to baffle all their ſkill; but at the end of that period, her fever began to abate, and longer intervals of reaſon ſhewed her recovery was near at hand. With joy unutterable did the generous Darnly anticipate her returning health; and, without intimat-

timating his motive for the requeſt, engaged Medway to accompany him the firſt afternoon ſhe was able to ſit up, that he might diſcover, if ſhe ſtill maintained her empire in his heart; for the compoſure he had of late aſſumed in her preſence, almoſt perſuaded him he had in reality begun to think of eraſing her idea from his boſom, by giving place to that of Louiſa; and ſuch a transfer of affections, though, before, one of his firſt wiſhes, would now have defeated all his diſintereſted intentions.

The involuntary emotions which agitated the heart of poor Medway when he beheld the altered countenance of his ſtill dear Emily, whom he had never before

ſeen but in the bloom of health, may be better imagined than deſcribed; and they became more viſible from his endeavours to conceal them. All his determinations of thinking of her only as the wife of his friend, inſtantly diſſolved in air: he would that moment have ſacrificed his life for the pleaſure of bathing her ſnowy hand with tears of ſorrow for her illneſs; and it was with difficulty he could reſtrain himſelf from expreſſing how much he was affected by the languid ſtate in which he beheld her.

What a trial for Emily! Tho' ſhe knew not that in her delirium, her carefully-ſmothered ſecret had eſcaped her, yet ſhe doubted that her ſiſter was in

part

part acquainted with it; and the fear that her emotions at the unexpected ſight of Medway, would ſtill more betray the ſituation of her heart, nearly reduced her to the ſtate from which ſhe was hardly recovered. Had ſhe ſuſpected that Darnly alſo judged of its ſenſations, ſhe would have almoſt expired at the idea; but his bringing Medway with him, was a proof to her that he little imagined the ſource of her recent ſufferings. Yet the unuſual melancholy which ſeemed to be impreſſed upon his features, perſuaded her all was not right within, and ſhe felt all the force of his unknown ſorrow: for even her preference of his friend did not prevent her from being tru-

ly ſenſible of his numerous claims to her eſteem, and gladly would ſhe have added love; but her rebellious heart too ſtrongly oppoſed her wiſhes, and refuſed to own the power of any one but Medway.

Since the abatement of her fever, ſhe had begun to entertain more rational ideas. The ſuperficial enjoyments of life had in a great meaſure loſt their eſtimation. She contemned herſelf for having ſo long placed her happineſs on thoſe honours, which, without content of mind, could beſtow no one ſatisfaction in life; and her reſolves, in conſequence of thoſe reflections, were ſuch as ſhewed the change of diſpoſition would be permanent. She wait-

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ed only for an opportunity of proving it by an ingenuous confeſſion of her folly, when the farther re-eſtabliſhment of her health ſhould prompt her noble lover to preſs for the completion of his wiſhes. But though ſhe meant to acknowledge one part of her error, delicacy forbade her to think of diſcloſing the other. All ſhe propoſed was, to own that ſhe had encouraged his addreſſes without feeling for him a proper degree of affection; and, low as ſuch a confeſſion muſt ſink her in his eſteem (after even fixing on a period for their nuptials) reflection had convinced her it would be better to do ſo, than deceive him with falſe appearances. Were ſhe to own a prior paſſion,

ſhe thought it might, by ſome means, reach the knowledge of its object; and dear as Medway was to her (after what had paſſed) nothing could have prevailed on her to humble herſelf ſo greatly as to own it. Her reſolution was therefore to refuſe the honour which awaited her, and conceal, if poſſible, from every one the motive.

Her amiable ſiſter was happy to obſerve the ſerenity which again began to dawn upon her mind, and equally ſo to find it would ſoon be more perfectly eſtabliſhed by the generoſity of her lover, who made her the confident of his intentions. And while Emily was expecting that every interview would produce an opportu-

portunity for the intended explanation, on a ſudden Lord Darnly pleaded buſineſs to the metropolis; and without fixing on any time for his return, begged her to be careful of her health, for the ſake of all thoſe friends to whom it was moſt valuable; and taking a reſpectful leave of the reſt of the family, ſaid he ſhould ſet out the enſuing morning.

Every one but Louiſa was in the greateſt aſtoniſhment. To leave her juſt on the eve of returning health, when he might with propriety have urged her to conſent to the completion of his long-expected happineſs, was perfectly enigmatical; and even determined as ſhe was to refuſe him, produced ſome diſagreeable ſenſa-

tions in her mind. However, she contented herself, with thinking that the proposed confession would now be attended with less pain; as from its probably becoming the subject of a literary intercourse, she should avoid that personal confusion which must necessarily accompany such a disagreeable explanation.

Her astonishment soon ceased; but her admiration of his generosity and goodness of heart was excited beyond the power of utterance, on receiving from him the following letter the evening after his departure.

"Chance, lovely Emily, has "discovered to me the means of "promoting your happiness more "effectually than by a marriage "with the unfortunate Darnly; "and

" and ſelf muſt be a ſmall con-
" ſideration when ſet in compe-
" tition with your felicity. I
" ought not to reproach you for
" deceiving me, ſince you alſo
" deceived yourſelf; be it there-
" fore my taſk to compenſate for
" the uneaſineſs you have ſuſtain-
" ed through your engagements
" with me, by propoſing an uni-
" on more conducive to your hap-
" pineſs; an union in which love
" will be the preſiding paſſion,
" and in which nothing will be
" wanting to gratify the attendant
" ones. Medway is deſerving all
" your tenderneſs; and would to
" Heaven I had ſooner known why
" you ſo long reſiſted its emoti-
" ons in his favour. But I hope
" it is not too late to repair
" the

" the injury I have innocently
" done him, though too late to
" recover my own tranquillity.
" Had I known the ſource of
" your refuſal, a title ſhould not
" have been wanting to compleat
" his conqueſt over a heart which,
" with that inconſiderable ſupe-
" riority, I aſpired to, without
" dreaming that it might ſecure
" the hand, and leave the mind
" unintereſted. The diſcovery of
" my error has conveyed the ſe-
" vereſt pangs of diſappointment:
" but my own ſufferings are for-
" gotten, in the idea of contri-
" buting to your felicity. Be *his*,
" deareſt Emily; and if wealth and
" title can encreaſe his merit in
" your eyes, they both await him.
" I have intereſt enough to pro-
" cure

" cure him a Barony, and ſhall
" think that wealth with which
" Providence has bleſt me, never
" ſo well employed as in the ſer-
" vice of the friend deareſt to my
" eſteem, and the woman moſt
" valuable to my heart. Baniſh
" every delicate apprehenſion of
" encountering the reproaches of
" your friends. I have candidly
" opened the affair to your father,
" by the hand which brings you
" this, and I know he is too good
" a parent to oppoſe your hap-
" pineſs.

" Lady Palmerſon will not,
" I am ſenſible, be ſo eaſily re-
" conciled to the diſappointment;
" nor will you, I fear, of the va-
" rious cenſures which will ariſe
" in conſequence of this event.

" But

"But that is the leaſt thing wor-
"thy your attention. Private ſa-
"tisfaction, overbalances public
"opinion; let the world, there-
"fore, make what ſtrictures it
"pleaſes. Where the happineſs
"of life is at ſtake, all other
"conſiderations ſhould fly be-
"fore it.

"I am conſcious of the pertur-
"bations into which the peruſal of
"this letter muſt naturally throw
"you, and that after it, nothing,
"by me, will be more dreaded
"than the preſence of my friend—
"for friend I ſtill muſt ſtyle him,
"though his merit and better
"fate rob me of all my ſoul
"held dear. But, think not,
"lovely woman, that I have made
"ſuch a property of your ſecret,

"as

"as to transfer it even to him
"who is moſt intereſted in it.
"Believe me, it reſts wholly with
"your own family and ourſelves:
"aſſign to other people what rea-
"ſon you pleaſe for the breaking
"off our engagements; take it
"upon yourſelf, or throw it up-
"on me, whichever appears to
"you moſt eligible.

"The frequent enjoyment of
"your ſociety will naturally prompt
"in Medway a renewal of thoſe
"attentions which propriety with-
"held him from, when he ſup-
"poſed your heart another's: and
"I truſt you will have too much
"reſpect to ſincerity, any longer
"to hide the ſatisfaction they be-
"ſtow on you. I have only ac-
"quainted him, in general terms,

"that

" that ſomething has happened to
" prevent an union between us
" from ever taking place, and not
" failing to attribute it to my
" own caprice. The zeal of his
" unconquerable affection for you,
" prompted him to be very libe-
" ral of his cenſures upon my
" conduct, till I aſſured him, your
" happineſs was my object, how-
" ever ſtrongly appearances might
" tend to ſhew the contrary. He
" was ſtrenuous for a farther ex-
" planation, but I begged leave to
" decline it till ſome future day;
" and entreating he would not
" withhold from me the conti-
" nuance of that large ſhare of
" eſteem and friendſhip he had
" ever profeſſed, I left him to put
" what conſtructions he pleaſed
" upon

" upon my unexpected departure;
" and a ſhort time will, I hope,
" convince him that I am not
" unworthy of it.

" As to myſelf, I go to invoke
" the aid of abſence; not to help
" me to forget you (for ſuch a
" conqueſt over my memory I
" never can acquire) but to ſtudy
" a virtue, that may enable me
" to behold you with the calm-
" neſs I could never attain to but
" at a diſtance from your charms.

" Before I quit the kingdom,
" I ſhall make it my buſineſs to
" procure my happy friend thoſe
" ideal advantages which, though
" they cannot encreaſe merit, help
" often to enhance its worth in
" the eyes of thoſe who know
" not the cares attendant on high
" life.

" life. Forgive the reflection; for
" the world, would I not inflict
" pain upon your gentle bosom;
" but gladly would I convince
" you that you too highly esti-
" mate those empty honours,
" which, longer than while their
" novelty attracts, can afford no
" real satisfactions to a reflecting
" mind. Medway may do honour
" to a title, but his intrinsic worth
" is such, that a title can do no
" honour to him. To his merit
" do I most heartily subscribe:
" but while I acknowledge that
" your heart could not have made
" a more worthy choice, my own
" will be long before it can con-
" quer those refractory emotions
" which constrain me to regret,

" that

" that the felicity of my friend
" ſhould be the deſtruction of my
" own.

" Farewel, amiable woman!
" may your health be ſpeedily re-
" ſtored, and may every bliſs a-
" wait you! But in the hours of
" your tranquillity, think that
" (though the eſtabliſhment of
" your happineſs compels me to
" reſign the title of lover) you
" will ever find the moſt diſin-
" tereſted and zealous of friends,
" in the

" Ill-fated Darnly."

" Amiable man! cried Emily, as ſhe finiſhed the peruſal of the above; " what a generous heart have I diſtreſt by my folly! How noble! how exemplary is thy conduct! But how ſhall I be able

to

to see my father after this discovery? Will he not justly condemn me?"

"No, my child," said Mr. Westbrook, who just then entered her apartment, and had overheard her soliloquy. "I do not condemn, but pity thee for having so long placed thy first happiness on such superficial enjoyments, and I am rejoiced that thou hast at length discovered them to be phantoms only. Fortunate it is for thyself, and equally so for that noble-minded young man, that the discovery was not retarded till after thou hadst vowed eternal fidelity to him, while thy heart was impressed with the image of another. As it is, both of you may yet be happy. Time, I hope, will soften his

his affliction: and ſhould his good intentions be diſappointed, in regard to the union he wiſhes to take place, thou wilt, I truſt, be happier in a ſingle ſtate than thy own reflections could poſſibly have left thee, though in poſſeſſion of the higheſt honours, unleſs love had cemented the tie. I blame thee moſt for the reſerve with which thou haſt behaved to a ſiſter deſerving all thy confidence; for in the counſel of a ſincere friend there is ever ſafety, beſides the ſatisfaction of relieving the boſom from its weight of hoarded grief. Let me entreat that mutual confidence may in future ſubſiſt between you. Candour and ingenuouſneſs are the ſtrongeſt bands of friendſhip. The prudent arguments of Louiſa might have

have ſhielded thee againſt the allurements of ambition: and tho' they had not entirely ſubdued thy ſoaring wiſhes, might have prevented thee from attempting the gratification of them at the expence of thy ſincerity. It might alſo have ſaved the generous Darnly from thoſe heart-rending pangs which muſt for ſome time attend the diſappointment of his hopes. For think, my child, how painful muſt be his ſenſations, to find himſelf the dupe of a feigned affection. Such a diſcovery, on ſome minds, might have wrought the moſt dire effects, and probably have ended in the death of two amiable men, and thy own eternal diſgrace.—But I will not add to thy unhappineſs, by ſetting

ting before thee thoſe fatal conſequences which, thank heaven, are not now likely to embitter thy days. It muſt be thy own fault if they are not yet happy, while it is the ſtudy of every friend to render thee ſo."

Tears were all the reply ſhe could make, — but thoſe ſufficiently teſtified how ſenſibly ſhe was affected.

Louiſa, though overwhelmed with ſorrow at the thought of Lord Darnly's leaving England, ſtifled her own emotions to reſtore the ſerenity of her ſiſter; and from that hour neither of them poſſeſſed a thought which ſhe wiſhed to conceal from the other. With ingenuous frankneſs Miſs Weſtbrook owned, that, from the

firſt moment of ſeeing his Lordſhip, her heart had felt for him a greater degree of partiality than ſhe had ever experienced for any of his ſex, and that it had been much ſtrengthened on a farther intimacy; but that ſhe had endeavoured to hide it even from herſelf; as ſhe looked upon the indulgence of her paſſion as criminal, after the object of his attentions became viſible.

This confeſſion inflicted the greateſt pain on the heart of Emily, as it perſuaded her ſtill more of the folly of a conduct which had not only went near to deſtroy her own happineſs, but had been a barrier to her ſiſter's alſo; as her rejection of Lord Darnly, when he firſt declared himſelf her lover, would

would probably have induced him to transfer his addreſſes from her to Louiſa, before his affections had taken ſo ſtrong a hold as to endanger his felicity.

Though the pangs of remorſe for ſome time preyed upon her mind, the mutual communication of ſentiments was to both the greateſt alleviation. Louiſa kindly endeavoured to reconcile her repentant ſiſter to herſelf; and while her attentions were engaged in attempting to divert her from too intenſe reflections on the paſt, that dejection, which hopeleſs love had kindled in her own gentle boſom, inſenſibly gave place to more tranquil thoughts. Thus both were benefitted, and time, the healing balm for mental ills, effected much;

but the abſence of Lord Darnly, was perhaps the moſt effectual ſoother; as his preſence would have kept alive thoſe embers of affection which preyed on the heart of one; while, to the other, it muſt ever have afforded a ſubject for contrition.

Lady Palmerſon, though aſtoniſhed at the ſudden departure of her brother, as ſhe knew him devoid of all caprice, forbore, thro' delicacy, to enquire into the motives, and continued her viſits as uſual to the farm; but the reſtraint ſhe laid upon herſelf, in oppoſition to thoſe wiſhes which curioſity muſt naturally give birth to, had ſhe even been far leſs intereſted in an explanation, was to Emily a ſufficient inducement to

relieve

relieve her Ladyſhip from her preſent ſuſpence.

The firſt time ſhe went to Malvern Mawr, with the moſt ingenuous frankneſs ſhe confeſſed her weakneſs, and the manner in which it was diſcovered; implored her Ladyſhip's pity and pardon for the uneaſineſs ſhe had occaſioned to the beſt of men, and begged her not to withdraw her friendſhip from her, as that would be the greateſt puniſhment that could poſſibly be added to the heavy one of ſelf-remorſe.

"Our friendſhip, my deareſt Emily," replied Lady Palmerſon, "I hope is more firmly eſtabliſhed than to be diſſolved by this untoward event; but I muſt acknowledge the diſappointment is ex-

treme. Would to heaven it were poſſible to prevail on Lord Darnly to give over his intentions of quitting England! Could we but keep him among us, Louiſa might in time perſuade him there was yet ſome charms in life. I am convinced ſhe feels for him already more than common friendſhip; and ſince his happineſs with one ſiſter is impeded, I would gladly ſee him compenſated by the poſſeſſion of the other.

Emily ſmiled at the earneſtneſs with which her Ladyſhip expreſſed her wiſhes; but company coming, prevented any thing more being ſaid upon the ſubject.

Till the topic had loſt its novelty, nothing was talked of for many miles around but the ſudden

den departure of Lord Darnly. Every one had anxiouſly anticipated the bridal ceremony, and, as is generally the caſe, for want of knowing the true one, aſſigned various improbable cauſes for the diſappointment: but moſt agreed, that he had changed his mind, and would ſeek a richer bride. The Weſtbrooks took no pains to undeceive them, but ſuffered every one to maintain at pleaſure their own opinion, or adopt another's, whichever was moſt conducive to their ſatisfaction. And tired at length with conjecturing, the ſubject grew leſs pleaſing, and failed not to give place to one more recent.

Medway was a daily viſiter, and though he had no idea of being

himſelf the object of Emily's partiality, could not help ſuggeſting, though ſhe had encouraged the addreſſes of Lord Darnly, that ſome other had long made a prior capture of her heart, and that a diſcovery of it had occaſioned his Lordſhip to decline her hand. He was the more inclined to think ſo from her former coolneſs to himſelf, and that part of the converſation previous to his departure, which paſſed between him and his friend; in which, he ſaid, her happineſs was his object in breaking their engagement. Medway's own ſenſations teaching him to pity unſucceſsful love, he felt for her a degree of ſympathy which inſenſibly led him to devote to her a much larger ſhare of his company

pany than uſual; and his endeavours to amuſe were received with a complacency ſo very flattering to his heart, that all his love revived, and it was with difficulty he could appear diſintereſted in his attentions.

Had he ſuſpected how warm an advocate he had in her boſom, nothing would have reſtrained him from diſcloſing his paſſion: but accident ſoon diſcovered to him a ſecret ſo infinitely intereſting to his happineſs; and after the diſcovery, it is but natural to imagine his timidity vaniſhed. A letter from Lord Darnly, congratulating him on the proſpect of his ſoon becoming Sir Charles Medway (though an honour he neither wiſhed or expected) gave

him greater ſpirits to plead his love, as it flattered him his propoſals would be better received by Mr. Weſtbrook; for moſt parents are happy to ſee their family ennobled: and though not equal to the aggrandizement it would have acquired in an alliance with his friend, he doubted not but the title of Baronet, with ſeven thouſand a year, would, with the good opinion which the old gentleman ſeemed already to entertain of him, procure him all the encouragement he could hope.

How great was his aſtoniſhment, when urging his paſſion with uncommon warmth, to hear his beloved Emily, with bluſhing modeſty, confeſs he had long been the choſen of her heart, though ambition

ambition had prompted her to resist its emotions in his favour, and induced her to accept the addresses of Lord Darnly, while a preference for him prevailed! She informed him also, that it was owing to her having made an involuntary discovery of her sentiments, during her delirium, which had urged that generous lover to decline her hand. "If, after this confession," continued she, "you still think it worth while to nourish an affection for one who has proved herself so little worthy of that distinction, there wants only the consent of my father to make me yours; but, previous to your proposing yourself to him as a son-in-law, I must entreat that you decline the generous offer of Lord Darn-

ly. There wants no title to make me ſenſible of your merit. I am fully convinced that happineſs conſiſts not in external honours; and your acceptance of it would overwhelm me with confuſion and uneaſineſs; for much as I have been enamoured of pomp and public ſplendor, it now appears to me far leſs enviable than

"Elegant ſufficiency, content,
"Retirement, rural quiet, friendſhip, books."

Illneſs has concurred to obtain a victory over my contending paſſions, and taught me to deſpiſe thoſe tranſitory enjoyments which too often are purchaſed at the dear price of permanent felicity. But though they are become unneceſſary to my happineſs, I muſt nevertheleſs

vertheleſs ever eſteem the amiable friend who meant to heighten it by beſtowing them alſo; and ſhall never ceaſe regretting the uneaſineſs I have cauſed him."

The ſatisfaction which inſpired the heart of Medway at this confeſſion, is inconceivable. At the time he diſcovered her only foible, to find its exiſtence terminate, was more than equal to the pleaſure of believing her exempt from any. With a heart overflowing with joy at the happy proſpect which awaited him, he aſſured her that the honour of being beloved by her was ſufficient felicity to him, without the addition of thoſe ſuperficial ones that could confer no real happineſs. Accordingly he returned an

immediate

immediate anſwer to Lord Darnly's friendly letter, and acquainted him that, by Emily's requeſt, he declined the honour which he had ſo generouſly intended him.

As the ſanction of Mr. Weſtbrook was not wanting to compleat their happineſs, there needed but few intreaties to prevail on Emily to permit her enraptured lover to name an early day for their marriage; and their intended union afforded the ſincereſt ſatisfaction to every part of her family. Mr. Aubrey, who always ſtyled himſelf a ſecond parent to the daughters of his worthy neighbour, preſented Emily with five thouſand pounds on the day of her marriage, and with it the jewels he had intended to preſent

preſent her with, had a ſimilar ceremony taken place as before expected. Her ſiſter alſo received, on the happy occaſion, the moſt generous proofs of his liberality and friendſhip.

Both the Bloomer and Palmerſon families were preſent at their nuptials; and Sir William having entirely conquered his criminal inclinations, beheld the happineſs of his friend with the ſincereſt ſatisfaction.

Lady Palmerſon only appeared depreſſed amidſt the general joy. The recollection of her brother being an exile from his native country, recurred more frequently to her remembrance that day than any other: but her ſerenity on that head was ſoon reſtored, on receiving from him

him a letter, intimating his intentions of ſtaying only a few months in the ſouth of France, and joining his friends again, on their return to town.

This intelligence produced the moſt heart-felt ſatisfaction on the part of Louiſa, as it flattered her his health had received no material injury from his mental troubles: and hope, that deluſive ſoother, preſented to her a diſtant proſpect of felicity, on the probability of beholding him once again; for at the earneſt entreaties of the Medways, both her father and Mr. Aubrey had promiſed to paſs a few weeks with them in London; and though ſhe could not have conſented to have left the parent whoſe downward path of

life

life was ſtrewed with flowers in her ſociety, yet, as he had been prevailed on to undertake the journey, ſhe experienced the moſt pleaſing and undefinable ſenſations, in the thoughts of accompanying him.

The return of Lord Darnly, juſt after their arrival in town, encreaſed her happineſs. For amidſt all the novel gaieties which ſurrounded her, ſhe could find but little ſatisfaction, till their friendly parties were enlivened by the frequent ſociety of him whoſe preſence had power to render every object pleaſing.

Her deſire of appearing agreeable to that amiable man (though reſtrained by the utmoſt delicacy) was too evident to paſs unnoticed;

ced; and it became the wiſh of all who intereſted themſelves in her happineſs, that her attractions might have equal force in rendering the attachment mutual: but though he experienced the utmoſt conſolation in her ſociety, it was ſome months before he found admittance in his heart for warmer ſenſations than thoſe of friendſhip.

His aſſiduities were almoſt equally divided between Miſs Bloomer and Louiſa while they continued inſeparable companions, and he knew not which of them, by engaging converſe, afforded greater conſolation to his drooping ſpirits; but the abſence of the latter (whoſe duty prompted her to return to Glendor with her father,

father, though love ſtrongly urged her ſtay) ſoon convinced him which had the firſt place in his thoughts, for his ſpirits quite forſook him after her departure.

Early the enſuing ſpring, the Palmerſons returned to their rural manſion, and his Lordſhip accompanying them, frequent opportunities again occurred of renewing his friendly intercourſe with Miſs Weſtbrook; and a ſhort time rendered her too dear to his heart, for him to miſtake the nature of his attachment.

The death of Mr. Weſtbrook, which happened before his Lordſhip had made known his wiſhes to Louiſa, prevented him from declaring himſelf till ſome weeks after an event which overwhelmed her

her in the deepeſt ſorrow; but, as ſoon as her unfeigned grief received ſome alleviation, and the unreſtrained luxury of tears had drained her heart of half its woe, in tendereſt terms he avowed his paſſion, and offered her his hand and fortune. The amiable girl, ſuperior to all coquettiſh arts, received the declaration with emotions too pleaſurable to be ſuppreſſed; and without any unneceſſary delays, ſhe accepted the proffered bleſſing. Her attachment to a rural life, in which ſhe had the greateſt opportunity of exerciſing thoſe amiable virtues which dignified her character, induced his Lordſhip to reſide chiefly in the country; and, during the ſummer-months, the moſt ſo-

cial

cial intercourſe ſubſiſted between the ſiſters; but, as Lady Palmerſon (in compliance to the wiſhes of her Lord) was conſtrained to devote a large portion of her time to the gaieties of London, they were obliged to ſupply the want of the pleaſures of perſonal converſation by a literary correſpondence much oftener than either of them could have wiſhed.

If Mrs. Medway could experience any greater ſatisfaction than in being united to the man of her affections, it was to think that ſuch an union had been the ſource of her ſiſter's happineſs; and often would ſhe return her moſt fervent thanks to Heaven, that her ill-judged ambition had not been productive of miſery to both.

If

If any particle of it remained, it was the laudable one of wiſhing to be eſteemed for the private virtues, not the public honours of Lady Darnly: and her emulation of the former, rendered her doubly valuable to the heart of her deſerving huſband.

After the death of Mr. Weſtbrook, Lord and Lady Darnly made the farm their country reſidence; and their family-circle was generally made happier by the preſence of the good old Aubrey, whoſe encreaſing years, tho' ſometimes invaded by perſonal infirmities, did not deprive him of any of thoſe ſocial qualities which rendered his ſociety ſo deſireable to his youthful neighbours.

Miſs

Miſs Bloomer's friendly intimacy, both with Mrs. Medway and Lady Darnly, ſubſiſted during the firſt two years of their marriage; but at the end of that period, a Weſt-Indian gentleman, who was on a viſit to her brother, pleaſed with her perſon, and more with her amability of manners, made her an offer of his hand; and her own inclinations fortunately concurring with the wiſhes of her friends, ſhe chearfully ſurrendered her liberty: but the happineſs of her marriage was conſiderably damped at the idea of quitting the neighbourhood in which ſhe had paſſed the happy days of infancy, and which, from its late agreeable additions, had been more endeared to her.

Mr.

Mr. Frankland's intention of ſtaying only a ſhort time in Barbadoes, and after diſpoſing of his plantations, returning to ſettle in England, helped however to ſoften the pangs of ſeparation, and Mrs. Frankland left her friends and native country with all the ſpirit ſhe could aſſume, for fear of giving her huſband pain; but much as ſhe endeavoured to ſuppreſs her tears in his preſence, they never ceaſed to flow when privacy permitted her the luxury of weeping. Probably her heart foreboded that the ſeparation would be eternal; for even her affection for the huſband of her choice could not ſubdue thoſe emotions that nature prompted. The event at leaſt ſhewed it to be ſo; for, after

ter a few letters had paſſed between the amiable trio, Lady Darnly received one from Mr. Frankland, with the affecting intelligence of the death of his dear Selina, who had died in child-bed, and who, in her laſt hours, had entreated him to implore the protection of her Ladyſhip for the little ſurviving pledge of their ſhort-lived happineſs, which he acquainted her was a female; and united his entreaties with thoſe of the dear departed, that he might be permitted to ſend her over.

The tender truſt was accepted with pleaſure; for, after the tribute of tears to the memory of her lovely friend, the greateſt reſpect ſhe could pay was to transfer her affection to her infant. It

was not long before the nurſe arrived with it; and the little Selina was introduced into the nurſery with her Ladyſhip's two lovely boys, and ſhared with them in all their mother's fondneſs. When encreaſing years admitted of inſtruction, ſhe was educated under her own inſpection, and became as conſpicuouſly amiable as the lovely woman who undertook the maternal taſk of "teaching her young ideas how to ſhoot."

On Mr. Frankland's return to England, he found her all his heart could wiſh; and his gratitude was unbounded as his ſatisfaction. He purchaſed an eſtate near Glendor; and the ſtricteſt friendſhip ſtill ſubſiſts between the principal characters in theſe memoirs, which it is probable will ſoon be ſtrengthened

ened by the union of Miſs Frankland with a ſon of Mr. Medway; and that of Lord Darnly's ſecond ſon with a daughter of Sir William Bloomer.

Having now ſeen all parties ſettled in harmony and good neighbourhood, I ſhall leave them in poſſeſſion of thoſe bleſſings which Providence generally entails on thoſe who merit them; and recommend, to my female readers, a contempt of all honours which are not derived from mental worth, and a ſteady perſeverance in thoſe private virtues which dignify the heart, and attract reſpect, without the aid of title.

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